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HUGE SUMMER GEAR GUIDE - BE COOL, STAY COOL

# Australian MOTORCYCLIST

FREE INSIDE: 2 TEAROUT AUSTRALIAN MAPS, ROAD &amp; ADVENTURE

NOVEMBER 2015 | BEAR INSIDE

*Australia's*  
LEADING MOTORCYCLE TRAVEL MAGAZINE

**APRILIA TUONO  
1100 RR BALLISTIC  
HYPERNAKED**

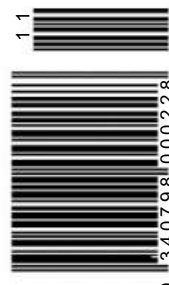
**SUZUKI GSX-S1000  
& GSX-S1000F LAUNCH**  
TWO AMAZING MOTORCYCLES  
WITH HERITAGE

**BIG VIKING  
EXPERIENCE**  
THE BEAR DOES  
NORWAY

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MIDDLETON  
HOTEL SEE  
THE LIGHT!**

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TO  
HIDE**

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**TRAVEL VICTORIA / WE WIN AT SURFSIDE / FIND  
YOUR ARTY SIDE WITH NORMAN / ROAD MAP:  
NORTH NSW / ADV MAP:SOUTH WEST QLD**

**GADGET MAN INSPECTS THE NEUTRINO / TOP TOURS / LESTER, BEAR & BORIS INSIDE!**





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- ★ 13 days Ford Mustang GT (or similar)\* car hire
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- ★ 2 adult tickets for a tour lap of Laguna Seca
- ★ 2 adults tickets for a driving experience at Las Vegas Speedway, including 7 laps driving either a Ferrari or Lamborghini\*\*
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- ★ 2 adult tickets for a hot lap of Texas Motor Speedway
- ★ 2 adult Victory Lane Club Suite tickets to the 2016 IndyCar Firestone 600 at Texas Motor Speedway
- ★ 2 adult tickets for a tour lap of Circuit Of The Americas
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at up to \$42,698.90 (depending on major prize winner's point of departure). Prizes drawn at 12pm on 20/11/2015 at Salmat Digital Pty Ltd, L2, 116 Miller St, Nth Sydney NSW 2060. The winners will be notified by phone and email by 22/11/2015 and published in The Australian newspaper on 25/11/2015 and on the competition website. \*Car hire is subject to the terms and conditions specified by the car hire provider. \*\*Participants must be 25yrs+ and hold a valid Au driver's licence. + An Eligible Shannons Club Member is a Shannons Club member who has created a member profile, uploaded a profile image and images of an enthusiast vehicle and an ultimate vehicle at shannons.com.au/club. ^ New Shannons Motor Insurance or Shannons Home & Contents insurance quotes/sales only (renewals and CTP quotes/sales ineligible). Limit 1 quote per vehicle or insured address. Permits: ACT TP 15/06441, NSW LTPS/15/04993, SA T15/1128. Full competition terms and conditions at shannons.com.au/forza.



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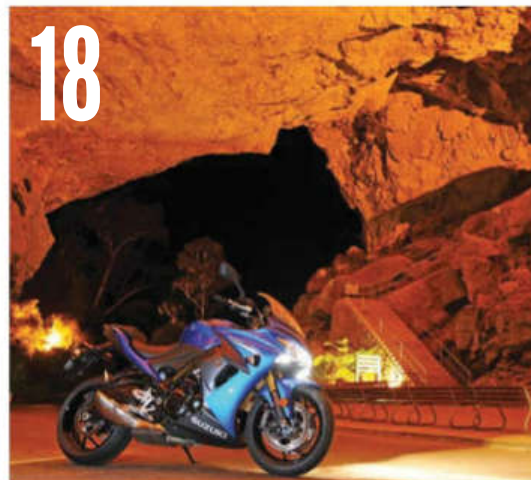
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"AH, SUMMER, WHAT POWER YOU HAVE TO MAKE US SUFFER AND LIKE IT!"

- RUSSELL BAKER



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BE AS COOL  
AS YOU CAN.  
PAGE 70



SIMPLY.  
AMAZING.  
PAGE 52





# change your view

## Kawasaki



Image shows accessories available



Optional panniers and other accessories shown

### VERSYS 1000

- Assist and Slipper Clutch
- ABS Standard
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- 3 Mode Traction Control
- Power Mode Selection
- Large Accessories Range
- Easy mount pannier system
- Available in Candy Burnt Orange

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Overseas models shown in some images. Optional accessories shown. Professional rider in controlled conditions



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## Kawasaki



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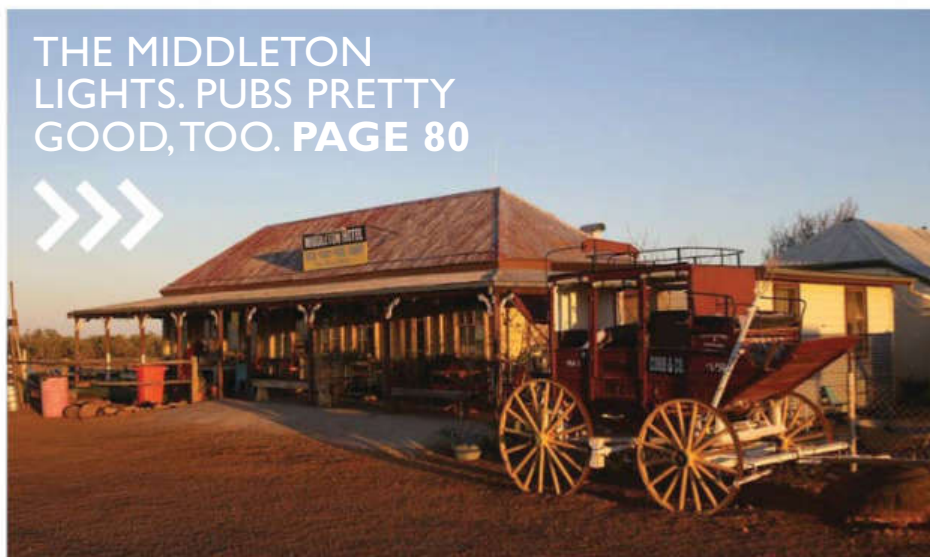
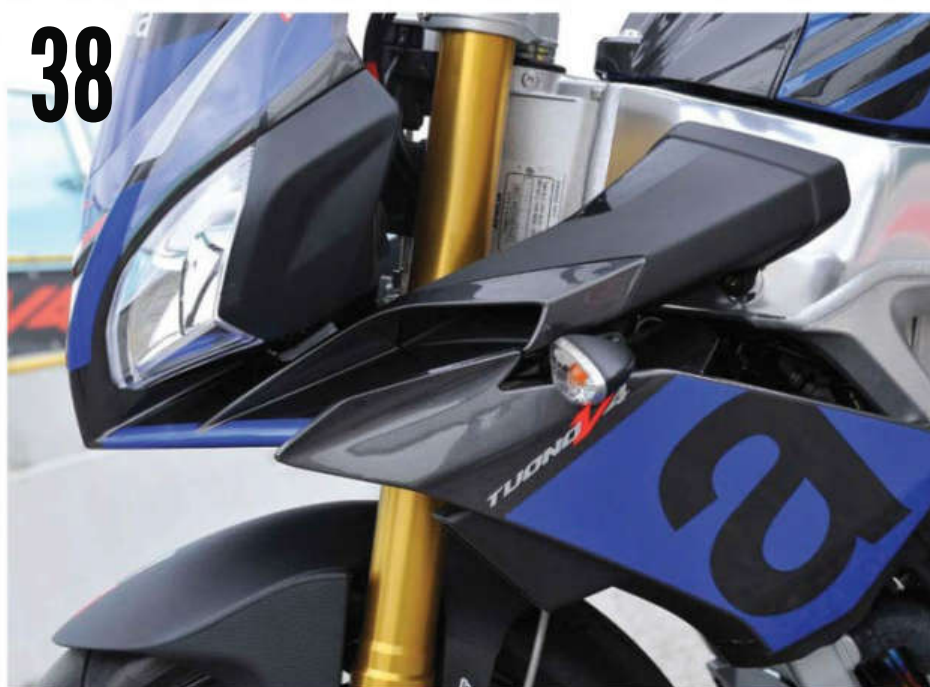
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Australian Motorcyclist Magazine



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GOING TO  
NEED  
A BIGGER  
SLEIGH!"**



**Editor** Stuart Woodbury  
**Editor Emeritus** J Peter Thoeming

**Sales Manager** Terri Dodd  
 advertise@ausmotorcyclist.com.au

**Designer** Amy Hale  
**Photo Editor** Nick Wood

**Photographers** Cain Maitland, Nick Wood

**Contributors** Emma Ayres, Elspeth Callender, Robert Crick, Joern Delfs, Phil Duncan, Mike Grant, Jim Green, Tony Hill, Robert Lovas, Phil Gadd, Ryan Lucas, Lester Morris, Brendan Nelson, The Possum, Dimitra Schonekas, Guy Stanford, Stuart Strickland, Michael Walley, Colin Whelan

**Editorial**  
 contactus@ausmotorcyclist.com.au

**Subscription enquiries**  
 www.ausmotorcyclist.com.au  
 info@ausmotorcyclist.com.au  
 0412 220 680 or 0418 421 322

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We encourage you to keep or recycle this magazine.



## EDITOR SPEAKS

### what's he blabbing on about now?

**T**ime for some hard but sensible words. There has been a bit of talk about court proceedings regarding the use of helmet cameras while riding a motorcycle, with one case – now being appealed – in Victoria which the rider lost.

I am against the usage of cameras on helmets. It is an unnecessary weight that could end up killing you if you fall off your bike and the camera or associated mounts puncture the side/top/wherever of the helmet and insert themselves into your skull! The camera could also add torsional twist to your neck, which might end up killing you as well. Why buy the latest and greatest in lightweight helmet, to attach more weight to it? Just look at what happened to Formula 1 racer, Michael Schumacher. A freak accident, but it does go to show what can happen.

I also dislike the main reason commuters give for riding along with their cameras mounted to their helmets. "Oh, I'll have evidence if someone crashes into me, or makes me crash".

Well, I can tell you that nine times out of ten that if these particular riders actually concentrated on their riding, they wouldn't end up in the situations they do. Basically, learn how to ride in heavy traffic; it really isn't that hard and you don't need to feel intimidated, or feel that everyone in a car is out to get you – they aren't. Prevention is far better than documentation!

And don't start me about how Police use them every day. Yes, they are exempt from the rules in the execution of their duties.

Are we so much of a nanny country that we need to document every little thing that happens to us? Seriously? Get a life. You can mount the camera to your bike very easily (if you have to) and you won't need to worry about it being laced with grey matter when you fall off.

Oh, and just imagine that you're wearing your helmet mounted camera and you happen to have broken a road rule, for which the Police have just pulled you over. Sure they'd need to get a warrant to seize the camera, but that's fairly easy for them to get. And don't tell me you never break the road rules, I reckon at least 98 per cent of us do – just don't tell anyone!

I'm sure a number of you are thinking that I'm starting to sound like Boris. No, not really, Boris' main aim is to write something to get a reaction (as I'm sure most of you have worked out), I'm more about trying to look after the riders who think adding a device to their 'safety' helmet will help them in some way. Concentrate on your riding and learn how to deal better with situations that arise, rather than relying on a camera when it all goes pear shaped. If you don't think you can, get some training, there are plenty of good motorcycle courses out there to get you upskilled and make your riding more enjoyable.

Cruel but fair, that's me.

Moving on from that, this morning I met with my mate, Alex, the young bloke who races in that wildly amazing road race called the Isle of Man TT. He was just about to fly off to England. Alex is going to live over there so he can be "closer to the racing", as in be closer so that he can race the entire Irish Road Racing season next year. His dad Chris and I will be setting up a current model front running supersport Kawasaki ZX-6R he's acquired so that Alex has a well-handling machine for the road surfaces he'll encounter. I'm sure you'll be with me when I say, "Good luck, mate. Show those Irish boys how an Aussie does it!"

Enjoy!

**Cheers, Stuart.**



# MULTISTRADA 1200



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Multistrada 1200 S model shown

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...while the smart children are inside, writing apps on their iPads which will make them rich by the time they turn 13.



all road rules,” he said. “It’s worse than Newtown! There are more scooters than people in Taiwan!”

I was unable to verify that, but it does seem as if there are well over a million unregistered scooters alone on the island.

Are there any Taiwanese readers out there who would like to defend their island’s reputation? Or add to it, come to think of it.

### SLIP SLIDIN’ AWAY

On that US trip mentioned above (you will read about it here very soon) I performed a spectacular slide when the rear tyre of my Road King encountered a thick patch of tar, formed by layers of those “snakes” of bitumen that road repairers use to cover cracks in the surface. It wasn’t quite as good as the sideways slide I did on a BMW road test on a gravel road in the Southern Highlands, where at one point the bike was at right angles to the front wheel, but it was scary enough.

I have not had such a severe reaction on tar anywhere in Australia, but I have lost traction a few times –in both hot and cold weather, so it’s not just that the heat makes the snakes slippery. Does anyone know why this bitumen (I assume) stuff is used when it’s obviously dangerous? Has any testing been done? Is anyone in particular responsible for it?

Please drop me a line;  
thebear@ausmotorcyclist.com.au .

**Peter ‘The Bear’ Thoeming**



# GRIZZLING

I was in the US, reading the Californian road rules in a booklet put out by that State’s tourism organisation (yes, sometimes I get a bit obsessive about stuff like that) and came across the explanation of the carpool (HOV – high occupancy vehicle) lanes. These are common on Californian freeways, and permit use by cars with two or more occupants. But that’s not how they are explained.

The booklet pointed out that they are “available to motorcycles and to multi-occupancy cars”. Yes, bikes get first mention. Maybe that kind of attitude explains why there are so many bikes on the road in California, and much of the rest of the US. People – including the authorities – actually think of bikes when they make rules.

Compare that with Australia, where a recent publication from the NRMA about the future of our roads and cities doesn’t even mention motorcycles. Fortunately

some of the authorities are more switched on; in NSW, at least, bikes can use the bus and transit lanes.

### AND MAYBE IN TAIWAN

I’ve been thinking of a trip to Taiwan. Obviously I would want to ride a scooter (like everyone else) when I’m there – or so I thought. Until I asked for advice.

A Japanese friend of mine worked in Taiwan for a large Japanese bank for some years. He blanched when I told him what I was planning to do.

“Taiwanese scooter riders are all insane,” he whispered. “One of them jumped the kerb to get to me once, and the blue trucks chase you all the time! Don’t do it, Bond san,” he continued in what I have to assume was a genuine Japanese accent, quoting Tiger Tanaka from one of his favourite Ian Fleming movies. “Take my helicopter instead.”

“You don’t have a helicopter. What’s wrong with Taiwanese scooter riders?”

“There are so many of them, and they cannot get anywhere unless they ignore

*“Are you sure that GPS map is up to date?”*



*“Let’s see anyone try to tailgate us now!”*



# THE NEXT ICON

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## WINNER WINNER, CHICKEN DINNER!

### PCRA 1hr Endurance races

Isle of Man TT racer, Alex Pickett and our own Stuart have done it again, winning the Pre Modern F1 PCRA one hour endurance race held at Wakefield Park recently. Not only that but Alex set a new lap record and lapped the Pre Modern field on his way, riding Stuart's beautiful looking (even if he does say so) CBR900RR. Stuart was buggered after two earlier races but managed to easily hold on for the win.

Stuart also nearly won the Pre Modern F3 class riding a Yamaha FZR400 with his mate, Chris. Stuart had nearly lapped the field when it was time to change over to Chris, but then a few laps later the battery failed – that's racing, as they say. Just for some 'light' relief, Stuart and Alex rode a CBR125R in the Commuterlite class and considering they're a pair of, er, "substantial" blokes, rode amazingly to come in 4th. Stuart was dicing for 3rd in the last few minutes but then the engine got hot and slowed, allowing the other rider to get a small gap. Sound like fun? Contact the PCRA to get your backside out there! [www.pcra.com.au](http://www.pcra.com.au)

## ULTIMATE TEST RIDE

### Harley-Davidson Dark Custom

Until 31 December 2015 you can pop

into your local Harley-Davidson dealership and test ride one of the 2016 reloaded Iron 883, Forty-Eight or Street models and go into the draw to win your very own Dark Custom motorcycle, designed and styled by Harley-Davidson Senior Industrial Designer – Dais Nagao.

The winning rider will be able to choose from the Iron 883, Forty-Eight or Street models and work alongside Dais to design their dream bike in Milwaukee, USA. Once designed, the bike will be built by a local Harley-Davidson dealer.

The trip also includes a money-can't-buy VIP trip to Milwaukee, the home of Harley-Davidson, where the winner will stay at a local hotel and receive a tour of the Harley-Davidson Museum, alongside tickets to sports and/or

music events taking place locally. To capture this memorable experience, Harley-Davidson is also offering the winner a camera, ensuring that the winner can record and share every experience from the trip. Further goodies include transfers, restaurant bookings, and clothing from the Harley-Davidson Black Label Collection.

To enter the competition, you simply need to book a test ride on a Harley-Davidson Street 500, Iron 883 or Forty-Eight. Click [www.h-d.com.au/dealerlocator](http://www.h-d.com.au/dealerlocator) to find your closest Harley-Davidson dealership and book your test ride.

## OUTBACK READING

### Motorcycling Adventures – A Journey into Australia's Outback with Bikes, Beers, Blokes and Babes.

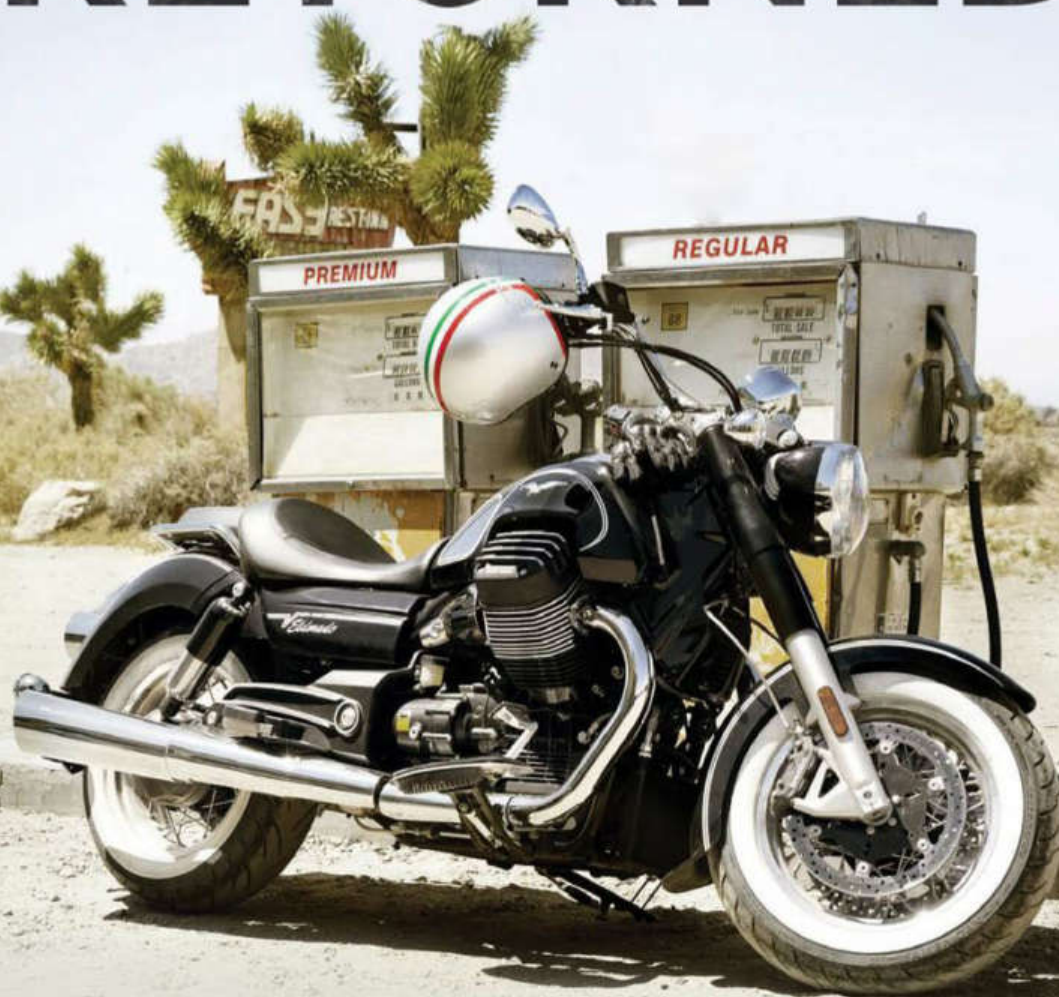
Did you know that Albany in Western Australia was nearly razed by a bushfire caused by a motorcyclist who crashed? This is but one of the amazing things you'll find out if you get hold of a copy of Michael Rohan Sourjah's book *Motorcycling Adventures – A Journey into Australia's Outback with Bikes, Beers, Blokes and Babes*.

Michael, who was born in Sri Lanka and these days lives in Sydney and runs touring company Motorcycle Adventures, has put together a book which he hopes will inspire you to travel through Australia's Outback. He is not only a member of the Ulysses Club but also the Bear Army. On top





# THE LEGEND HAS RETURNED



**CALIFORNIA 1400 ELDORADO**  
**\$24K\* RIDE AWAY**

The new California Eldorado has been meticulously recreated to reflect the originality of its ancestor by adapting it from the past into the future whilst maintaining its heritage. At its heart beats the 1400cc 90° Transverse V-Twin engine. The new California 1400 Eldorado, in homage of its forefather embraces bullhorn handlebars, spoked wheels, full cover shock absorbers, daytime running lights, luxurious saddle, passenger grab rails and gem-shaped taillight which all combine to make the Eldorado stand out on the open road. Standard features also include Ride By Wire with three-way switchable mapping, cruise control, ABS and Traction Control. The Eldorado has performance, handling, comfort, technology and style. The Eldorado is waiting to be ridden where ever your journey may take you.

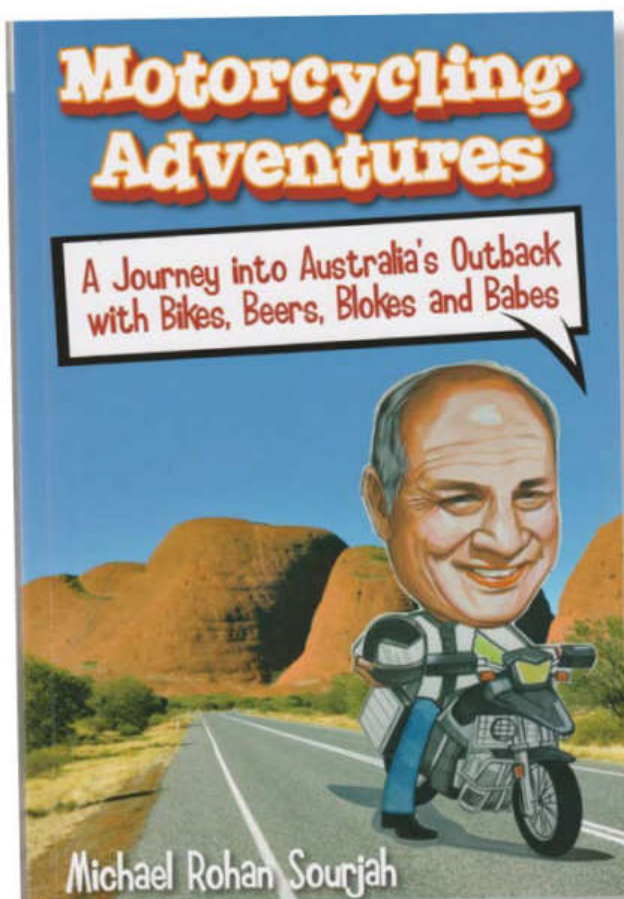
**MOTO GUZZI**  
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\*Recommended Ride Away Price. Price is subject to change without notice. Overseas models shown for illustration purposes. Consult your Moto Guzzi dealer for more details. Moto Guzzi Australia promote safe and responsible riding.

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of that he has a talent for telling a story and capturing the many, er, unusual characters whom he and his travelling companions meet. The enthusiasm for motorcycles, travel and Australia's Outback shines from every page, and I suggest that if you've ever thought about a long trip but haven't been quite game, this is the book you need to get you going. Copies are available for \$29.95 from Michael (\$5 goes to the Ulysses Club's



arthritis research charity) by ringing 0438 264 632 or from [info@motorcyclingadventures.com.au](mailto:info@motorcyclingadventures.com.au). If you'd like to know more about Michael and his company, take a look at [www.motorcyclingadventures.com.au](http://www.motorcyclingadventures.com.au).

## HARDLY NOTICEABLE

### Performance Trailers

As much as some people think trailers are outrageous, they've obviously never towed a trailer from NSW company Performance Trailers. The coil spring shock absorber suspension allows for a very smooth ride and the braking system helps to keep the bike stable. Performance Trailers' latest customer, Ian, said, "I cannot fault

this trailer in any way. It tows perfectly and it has a lot more weight in it now. It is hardly noticeable behind the trike." Both The Bear and Stuart have sampled a Performance Trailer and have been amazed at the engineering, quality and the fact that yes, they are hardly noticeable behind the bike, They feel as if you're just carrying a pillion. Contact Rob at Performance Trailers on 02 6652 5442.

## YES, THEY'RE LISTENING TO YOU!

### Ducati Monster 1200 R

If you've bought a Ducati motorcycle you'll know that you get the opportunity to give the factory direct feedback. The release of the Monster 1200 R is an example of the results such feedback from you can bring!





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## TRANSFORMERS!

### Kawasaki Z1000

The 2016 Kawasaki Z1000 has been given a slipper clutch with a reduced price; what more could you ask for! This transformer-like bike is now available in a stunning, yet understated Metallic Matte Carbon Gray



with Candy Crimson Red highlights. The price has been reduced \$1300 to \$15,499 + on road costs. See your local Kawasaki dealer. Now!

## BRING YOUR TOOLKIT!

### Walcha Vintage Motorcycle Touring Trophy

Walcha Vintage and Classic Owners Motorcycle Club is holding its Vintage "Touring Trophy" Challenge on the weekend of Saturday 21-Sunday 22 November. An open invitation to all vintage bike owners and clubs to take part in a fun event. You can trailer your bike to Walcha to take part, if you wish and you should pre-register to avoid a queue on the opening morning. The route is a secret and maps will be handed out half-an-hour prior to the event. There will be a Le Mans start this year and there will be plenty of great bikes to eyeball. Walcha has a top notch array of accommodation from caravans, motels to friendly pubs and guesthouses. Refer to our advertisers in this issue, and tell them we sent you. Contact Neil Weir via email for more information about this event or to pre-register: neil.weir2@gmail.com. ●



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### NEW SOUTH WALES



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# SUZUKI GSX-S1000 & GSX-S1000F

LIKE A DUCK TO WATER – THEY'RE THAT GOOD!

WORDS STUART WOODBURY PHOTOS KEITH MUIR











A couple of years ago I mentioned to Suzuki Australia that the brand desperately needed a hyper-naked machine in its range. Roll on to 2015 and here it is – the GSX-S1000. And to make it even more special, Suzuki has

also released the full faired version – the GSX-S1000F.

Both bikes are essentially the same, except for the obvious full fairing of the F. Both are centred around the super torquey K5 GSX-R1000 in-line

four engine, which powered the 2005-2008 GSX-R1000. The engine has been updated to modern “standards”; not that there was anything wrong with the K5, it’s just that there are stricter emission controls now on the one hand, and





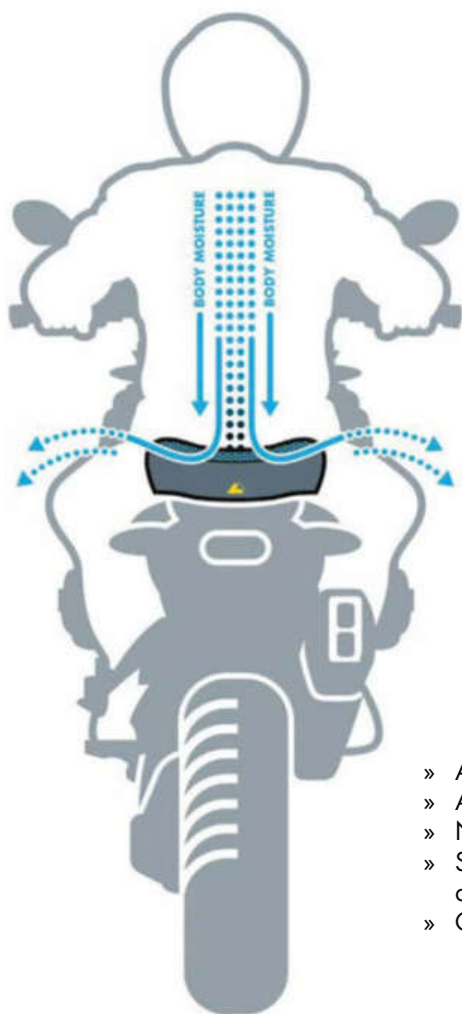
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newer processes for an even smoother engine. The K5 engine was chosen for its long-stroke design, rather than a “screamer” type engine with all the power up the top end. The K5 engine was also known for its broad low-end torque, smooth throttle response and a very strong top end for fun.

The things they changed internally were the pistons – they are three per cent lighter – cylinder head, crankshaft

and rods, camshafts, cylinder plating (SCEM), gearbox and ratios, intake system and exhaust system. The plugs were upgraded to Iridium spark plugs. Suzuki has chosen an engine suited to what an experienced rider would want from a hyper-naked or full faired “Street Sport” motorcycle. After riding both versions over the two day launch I can attest to the engine being silky smooth and having lots of torque and power

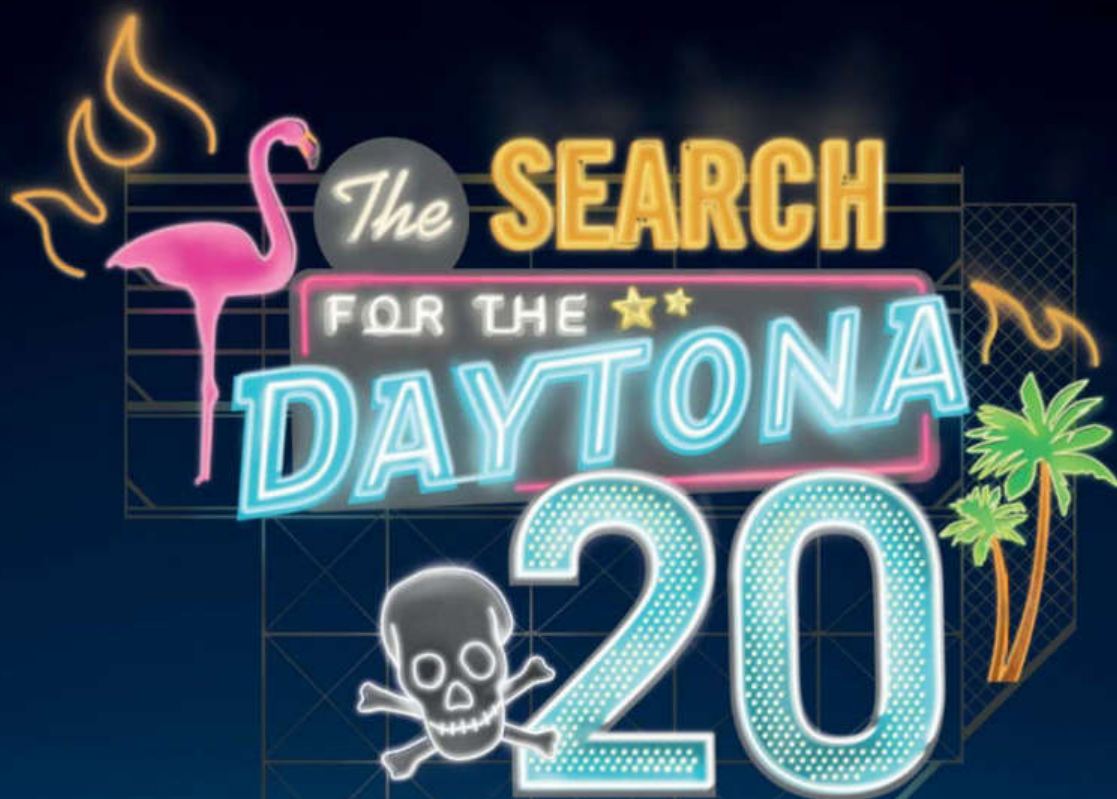
right through the rev range. Matched to that is a silky smooth gearbox with nicely spread ratios.

You can hold it in a lower gear and keep the engine in its “fat” range, or keep

*2005 GSX-R1000 stripped down / The new GSX-S stripped down – looks similar, doesn't it!*







# The **SEARCH** FOR THE ★★ **DAYTONA** **20**

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it in sixth and cruise along. I even got it down to around 37km/h in sixth and strongly accelerated away, which is excellent.

Suzuki has fitted a five sensor, three modes and off, traction control system. The sensors work on the front wheel, rear wheel, crank position, gear position and throttle position. Suzuki's system precisely controls output by optimising ignition timing and air delivery. This results in a smooth, natural control of power, which does not affect sportier riding even when the system is working.

The frame looks very similar to that of the K5 GSX-R, but you'll see that you're wrong once you look at it closely. The frame itself is all new and the current model GSX-R1000 swingarm is fitted. In fact, the frame is lighter than the current GSX-R's! You get great stability and loads of feel.

Suspending each end are forks and a monoshock from KYB, which are sporty yet plush in soaking up crappy road surfaces. However, the models are different in the front end. The F version has less air gap, or more oil (your pick). This makes for slightly more nimble turn in on the F - something I came to love about it. The naked version is slightly slower in turn in, but when you think that the naked might well be ridden by someone who travels a little faster than an F owner, this is a good thing to have. It might not help you keep your licence, though.

For the launch, Suzuki had wound in one ring more preload on the front and one notch more on the rear. For a big unit like me, this made a world of difference, whereas with the standard (softer) front setting, it wouldn't ride rough sections of road as well.

Gripping the road are Dunlop D214 tyres, or RoadSports as sold in Australia. They are sports tyres with high levels of grip, excellent wet weather performance



*Stuart is wearing a Shark Speed R Carbon II helmet, Dririder EXO 2 jacket, Dririder Rapid gloves, Draggin jeans and Sidi Vertigo boots.*





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**HIGHLIGHTS:** A radical peak design channels air while providing **day-long shade**.

The upper-vent diffuser system (from our top-of-the-line race helmet, the Corsair-V) gives you **greatly-improved airflow and helmet stability**. Arai's vented neck roll uses the airflow

under the rider's neck to further enhance ventilation by **extracting more interior**

**heat and stale air**. The groundbreaking patent-pending FCS cheekpad design actually **cradles and supports** your head — while providing an **exceptionally quiet ride** by muffling more wind noise coming in from below your ears (the main source of helmet noise). FCS also has Arai's exclusive 5 mm peel-away custom-fit layer, giving you even more ability to craft **the perfect fit and comfort for your face**. The fully removable liner is **easily washed and fresh** for the next day. And the unique **flip-up faceshield** actually moves up and under the peak.

It's a helmet you may never want to take off ...  
once you remember you're actually wearing it.



Patent-pending FCS Cheekpad Design



### **PLEASE BE AWARE**

Motorcycle helmets not tested or approved to AS/NZS 1698-2006 are not legal for use on Australian roads. Not only may you be fined by the police, if your helmet is not approved, it will void any warranty covered by the Australian importer.



(which we found out about) and long wear. I can tell you that after two days flogging these bikes, the tyres looked as though they had only been pushed around the workshop – highly impressive! We are going to grab a set and use them in more day to day familiar environments and let you know how they fare.

The LCD instrument panel has a comprehensive amount of information available, but the best feature is the five different rev counter displays. Standard, chaser, descending, one bar and two bar choices can be set. I loved the chaser, which gives you a quick glimpse of what revs you got to.

Another new feature and a first for any Suzuki motorcycle is that you no longer need to pull the clutch lever in to start it! Yes, a mostly insignificant feature that many people wouldn't think about. But it makes a huge difference when you have to live with pulling the clutch in all the time, rather than just pressing the starter button while the bike is in neutral.

Suzuki's price for both of these bikes is a steal. \$14,990 + on roads for the naked and \$15,790 + on roads for the faired F model is amazing when you look at the high end quality of products and materials used. The one that you hold is the handlebar from Renthal. The "Fat Bar" gives you high levels of rigidity, reduced weight and reduced vibration, with the latter not even noticeable while riding either version.

Comfort is outstanding; we rode just over 400km on the first day and I felt like we'd done 200. The seat is supportive and the position of the bar has the slightest amount of weight on your wrists – perfect! You do have a little more comfort on the F, due to the fairing and screen, but both bikes are great if you want to ride long distances.

In a comparison with competitors, the GSX-S and F are both the cheapest and among the highest spec'd. For the F version, only the Kawasaki Ninja 1000 really compares, and the Suzuki is better priced. The only thing that's a negative is that you can't get accessory panniers. But Suzuki is not marketing the F like this; it is more aimed at someone who doesn't want the lean-forward of a sportsbike, but wants to retain the sharp handling and power characteristics.

After riding both bikes for the two days, I have to say that I'm a huge fan of the GSX-S1000F. The screen is in the right spot, the handling is spot on and the engine has plenty of power for just about any rider out there. While I am a big naked bike fan, I do love the GSX-S1000 as well, but the F just has that little bit more to offer, and for only \$800 extra it's well worth it. ●



## SPECS SUZUKI GSX-S1000 & GSX-S1000F

PRICE: \$14,990 & \$15,790 (plus on-road charges)

WARRANTY: Two years, unlimited distance

SERVICING INTERVALS: Every 12,000km or 12 months

ENGINE: Liquid-cooled in-line four cylinder, 4-stroke, DOHC, 4 valves per cylinder

BORE x STROKE: 73.4 x 59mm

DISPLACEMENT: 999cc

COMPRESSION: 12.2:1

POWER: 107kW @ 10,000rpm

TORQUE: 106Nm @ 9500rpm

TRANSMISSION: 6-speed, wet multi-plate clutch, chain final drive

SUSPENSION: Front, 43mm inverted fork, adjustable preload, compression and rebound, travel 120mm. Rear, monoshock, adjustable preload and rebound, travel 130mm.

DIMENSIONS: Seat height 810mm, weight 209 & 214kg (wet), fuel capacity 17 litres, wheelbase 1460mm

TYRES: Front, 120/70/ZR17. Rear, 190/50/ZR17

FRAME: Aluminium twin-spar

BRAKES: Front, twin 310mm discs with radial mount four-piston ABS calipers. Rear, 240mm disc, single-piston ABS caliper.

FUEL CONSUMPTION: 5.8-7.9 litres per 100km, premium unleaded

THEORETICAL RANGE: 215-293km

COLOURS: GSX-S1000: Metallic Triton Blue, Sparkle Black/Candy Daring, Mat Fibroin Gray. GSX-S1000F: Metallic Triton Blue, Mat Fibroin Gray

VERDICT: S: SUPERB! F: FABULOUS!



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# TRAILER

## THE BEST OF THE WEST IS COMING

In the next issue we bring you a report of the first Best of the West with the Bear ride. It was certainly a laugh, as these photos try to show; being conducted in up to 49 degree (120 Fahrenheit) heat it was also one hot ride!

Getting around to so many of the American West's scenic and other attractions was a hoot despite making for some long days, and everyone (the gang was all Aussie except for the guide and driver) got something out of it – some people got more than one thing. Just ask the blokes who were collecting “cards” in Las Vegas... PT

(clockwise from top left) “Hey, it’s a job!” Bears are everywhere, holding signs or American flags or just decorating the place. Very nice! / “Hurry up with that photo! There’s a bottle of San Francisco Steam Beer over there that has my name on it!” / Top level engineering at a roadside stall. It is amazing how quickly the ever-present sun warps and destroys timber. / Wooden’t it get you? Nobody in the West seems to be offended by wooden Indians; and why wood you when the carving has as much personality as this? / Who wins the Russian babushka lookalike contest? Our MOTORCYCLIST neck tubes were voted Most Useful Accessory; soaked in icy water they provided welcome relief from the heat.



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# BIKE SHOW BY THE BEACH

SURFSIDE SIX... NO, ER, LOTS! **WORDS** THE BEAR **PHOTOS** TERRI DODD



What's even better than spending a Saturday morning admiring your mates' bikes and shooting the breeze over coffee and excellent burgers? How about admiring a lot of other people's bikes that you've never seen before? And, to gild the lily, bikes that have been selected by their owners as show material?

That's what you get at Surfside Motorcycle Garage's monthly shows.

Trevor and Rob and the rest of the crowd at Surfside and the on-site café work hard to make these days a success. They kick off early, from 8.30am, and finish after the prize-giving at noon. There's a swag of prizes and a highly qualified panel of judges (yes, I was one of them at the recent Japanese

Day) and even if you don't win a prize, or even put a bike into the contest, you're guaranteed to have fun.

The Japanese Day was made even more special by our H2 Kawasaki, ridden to the shop by Nigel and immediately the centre of attraction.

A wonderful photo opportunity occurred with a beautiful Rickman Kawa nose to nose with the H2; as Rob pointed out, not something you're likely to see again. We scored a prize, too, with our Yamaha Bolt outfit – Best Cruiser. I didn't vote in that category! The other judges were really taken with the bike, especially the 2SUS paintwork.

It was a lot of fun, and you can find out about future events at [www.surfside.net.au](http://www.surfside.net.au). The address is 42

*(clockwise from top left) Our outfit glows in the sun. / Nigel rolls up on the Kawasaki H2, with a stoked audience. / Nose to nose Kwakas: H2 and Rickman. / Yes, that's me, hamming it up for the camera! / The winner of the People's Choice Award, with proud owner.*

Winbourne Road, Brookvale, 02 9905 4755 or [trev@surfside.net.au](mailto:trev@surfside.net.au). Opening hours are Monday to Saturday, 8.30 am – 5.30 pm and Saturday & Sunday, 8.30 am – 3 pm. The café is open 7 days a week.

"The workshop stays open late Saturday afternoon to help riders with morning sport and family commitments," says Trev. "We happily open out of hours with a bit of notice." And they know how to put on a party! ●



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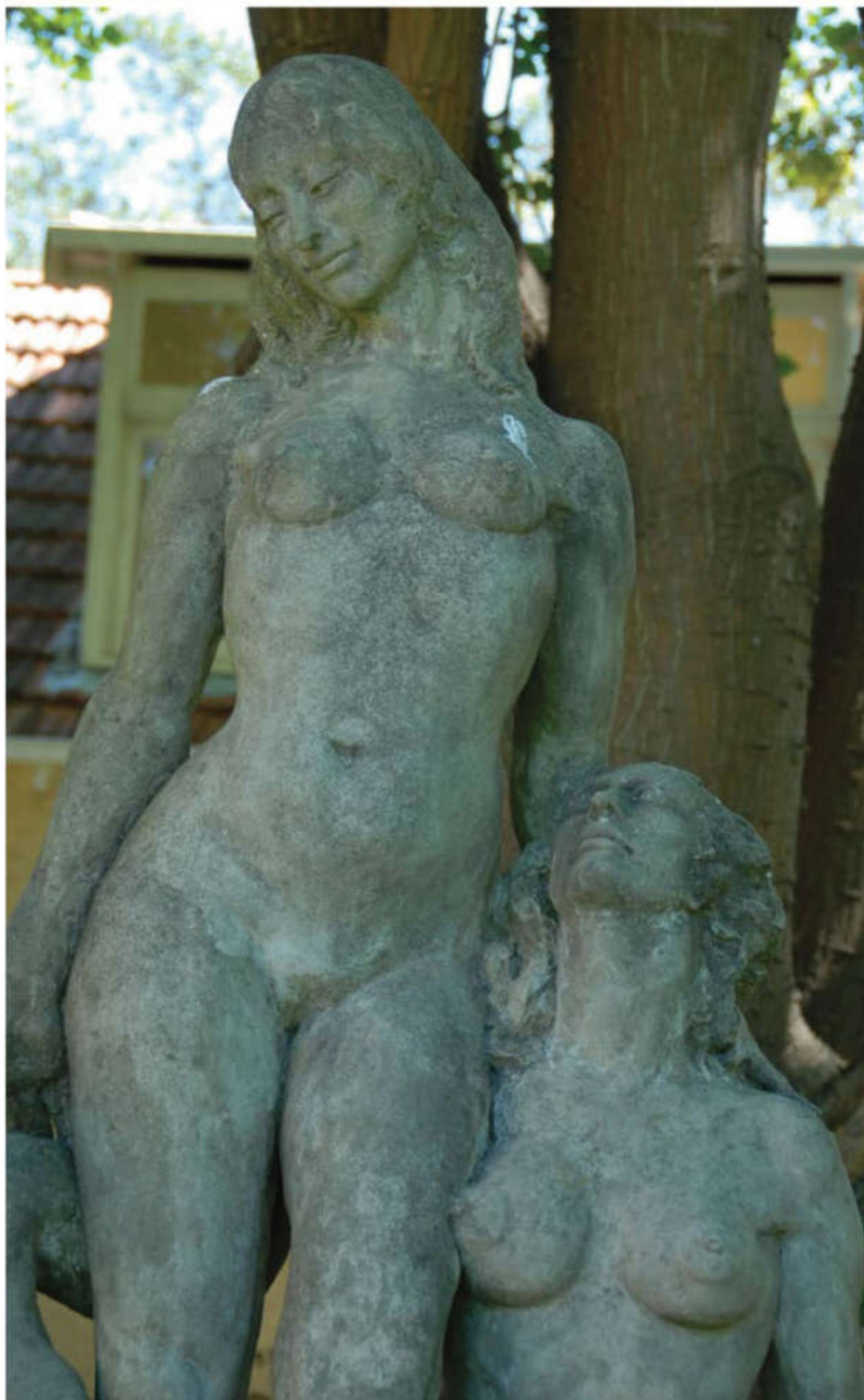


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# CONCRETE DESIRES

NORMAN LINDSAY GALLERY & MUSEUM **WORDS/PHOTOS** THE BEAR

*Do you like boobs a lot?*

*(Yes, I like boobs a lot.)*

*You gotta like boobs a lot...*

*Steve Weber, The Fugs First Album*

**N**orman Lindsay would have agreed. I suspect that he was a fun guy, and

he definitely liked boobs a lot. Why else would he have immortalised so many young women in concrete, with special emphasis on their chests? Concrete, I hear you say? A material more commonly associated with getting rid of troublesome people than sculpting them,

concrete obviously has its advantages; not least among them being that it's cheap. But Lindsay was of course more than a sculptor in cheap building materials.

Let's get the background facts out of the way. The Norman Lindsay Gallery





## Norman Lindsay Gallery & Museum

14 Norman Lindsay Cres,  
Faulconbridge NSW 2776,  
02 4751 1067

The gallery is open every day, 10.00 to 4.00  
(closed Christmas Day)

Entry fees are:

Families \$36

Adults \$15

Concession \$12

Children (6-12 yrs) \$6

and Museum is a stone cottage on a large block of land which also contains some smaller buildings including two used as an oil painting studio and an etching studio. The large garden is dotted with Lindsay's sculptures. He and his wife Rose bought the property in 1913, and Lindsay transformed it over the years, adding classical colonnades, fountains, paths and sculptures. In the late 1950s, Lindsay began converting the house into a gallery to accommodate paintings, drawings, etchings, woodcuts and ship models made during his life.

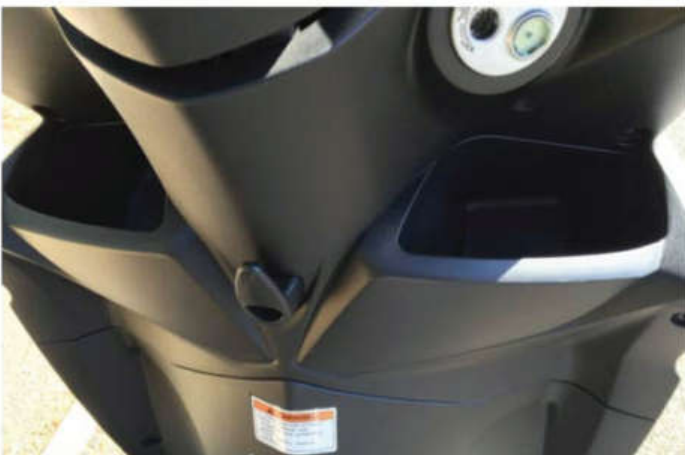
Should you be interested in a fictionalised version of Norman and Rose's life up here you could rent the film *Sirens*, which has been described as soft-core pornography but is actually a good-natured attempt to juxtapose church and bohemian attitudes to sexuality. As a bonus, you get Elle Macpherson without her duds on.

As you can see, Norman Lindsay was a versatile and possibly hyperactive bloke. To be honest, I think that the ship models are possibly more interesting than the nudes, which are a bit same-ey.

Lindsay died in 1969, and the National Trust bought the place in 1970. The oil painting studio has been preserved as it was at the time of his death with unfinished oils and materials.

These days the place is a popular tourist attraction. It makes a good one-day excursion from Sydney along the Great Western Highway. There's a café as well, attached to the house and surrounded by figures from *The Magic Pudding*, one of Lindsay's enduring works. And lots of concrete (and some bronze) boobs... PT ●





# SUZUKI ADDRESS 110

NEVER JUDGE A BIKE BY ITS COVER **WORDS/PHOTOS** STUART WOODBURY

The old saying, “never judge a book by its cover” is something you’ll certainly hear ringing in your ears after riding the new Suzuki Address 110. When Lewis Croft (Suzuki Australia Marketing Manager) asked if we’d like to do a review on it, I had a good old laugh. But then I thought, why not? I can ride it in the dark of night and no one will know who I am, then I can discreetly park it away, out of sight.

When Lewis was speaking to me about it, he said it performs sort of like a 150cc scooter. Of course, I didn’t believe him. But when the Address 110 arrived to the AMM Cave and I “scooted” away on it, I was shocked that it actually does perform quite well, and much better than expected. There was no need for me to hide away in a corner or on the darkest of dark nights. I could and did happily ride it around during daylight, zooming

*(Clockwise from top left) Child’s play! / Bigger than expected / Mandatory shopping hook is there.*

past cars as I would on bigger capacity bikes and having a lot of fun in general.

Of course, it did struggle a little to maintain speeds over 90km/h, but you do expect that. For a rider who wants an easy to live with scooter that will certainly handle speeds up to 70km/h



# JUST TWO RULES

1. Don't Fall Off the Motorcycle.
2. Don't Get Eaten by a Bear.

Our friend Art Snyder came up with those "rules" years ago and we've used them ever since to welcome riders to every guided tour. Remember them and you'll have a great time!

Let GAMCT show you a great way to take a FANTASTIC ride with old friends, make new friends, enjoy the sights, sounds and camaraderie of the journey. All while you relax, enjoy the ride and have loads of fun, with no worries about the details.

Every day, you'll be on the best motorcycle roads we can find. We'll take you to the famous places you've heard of and show

you hidden gems and personal glimpses into Americana that you would likely never discover on your own.

A Guided Tour may not be for everyone, so most of our guided tours - and many others, including custom routes - can be taken as self-guided motorcycle tours or Road Trip auto tours for non-riding friends or family. Motorcycles and sports cars (or even something family friendly) can make a great combination.

And about the rules - you really don't need to worry about #2. But if you're lucky you'll SEE some bears - we often do!



## 2016 Guided Tour Schedule

Guided Tour	Starting	Ending	Highlights	Bears
<b>Route 66</b> 14 Ride Days / 4,025 km	3 June Chicago, IL	18 June Los Angeles, CA	This ribbon of highway carries more American Legend than any other pathway across this great nation.	Maybe
<b>Glacier NP / Canada</b> 14 Ride Days / 3,560 km	22 June Seattle, WA	7 July Seattle, WA	Wonderful roads for motorcycling, incredible scenery. Meet your new Canadian friends at the Calgary Stampede!	YES
<b>Pacific Coast - North</b> 7 Ride Days / 1,930 km	8 July Seattle, WA	16 July San Francisco, CA	Ride from sea level to 2,000 m elevation. Rugged coastline, whales and the tallest trees on earth.	YES
<b>Pacific Coast - South</b> 7 Ride Days / 2,157 km	16 July San Francisco, CA	24 July Los Angeles, CA	Not just Coast! Explore the grandeur of Yosemite, Kings Canyon and Sequoia National Parks too.	YES
<b>Sturgis Bike Week</b> 12 Ride Days / 3,540 km	4 August Las Vegas, NV	17 August Denver, CO	A "bucket list" event! Yellowstone, Grand Teton and Rocky Mountain National Parks just happen to be along the way.	YES
<b>Best of the West</b> 14 Ride Days / 4,510 km	20 August Los Angeles, CA	4 September Los Angeles, CA	TEN National Parks and the Pacific Coast make this just about the most fantastic trip you can imagine - on a bike!	YES
<b>Coast to Coast USA</b> 21 Ride Days / 7,250 km	9 September Los Angeles, CA	1 October Washington, DC	We can't show you all of it, but you'll see as much of the USA as possible in three weeks. This is a Rider's dream!	YES
<b>Route 66 Extended</b> 17 Ride Days / 4,520 km	14 October Chicago, IL	4 November Los Angeles, CA	Everything that makes Route 66 one of our most popular tours, plus two nights in Las Vegas and one in Death Valley.	Maybe

**Reserve any 2016 Guided Tour before 15 November and get the 2015 Price.**



Visit our website for complete information and pricing

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and eat traffic like a hungry bear eats a meat pie, you might well look at one of these.

Handling is also not what I expected. Usually, with small scoots like these, the front suspension feels “cheap” and smashes around over our crap roads, but not this baby. It was a big surprise to feel that the suspension is well damped and the front of the frame feels solid,

resulting in a competent ride.

Storage space was the other big shock. Looking at how tiny the Address 110 appears and with tyres that are not much wider than a kid’s pushbike, I was amazed to find a huge under seat storage compartment. It will take a full-faced helmet and maybe a loaf of bread. Our test bike also had the accessory top box fitted and that takes a full-faced helmet

too. At the front there are two open “pockets” in the fairing, great for carrying your phone or wallet; and the mandatory shopping hook is there, too.

At the \$2490 + orc price tag, anyone who lives around the inner city and maybe even surrounding suburbs in any major city, will find the Suzuki Address 110 massive value for money. Take one for a ride and you’ll see what I mean. ●





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Stuart is wearing a Shoei NXR helmet, Berik Force 2.0 suit, Held Titan gloves, Forcefield Blade back protector and Alpinestars Supertech R boots.





# APRILIA TUONO 1100 RR

THUNDER DOWN BELOW

**WORDS** STUART WOODBURY

**PHOTOS** TIM MUNRO & NICK WOOD





Aprilia's Tuono ('Thunder' in Italian) is a hyper-naked machine that stirs emotions as only an angry V4 engine can do. This year the engine capacity has been increased and handling is sharper than ever, producing one of the most precise and enjoyable hyper-naked bikes on the market.

The primary goal of the changes made to the already extraordinary Aprilia Tuono V4 engine was to increase torque, especially at medium to low

revs, in order to increase effectiveness and riding pleasure on the road. To achieve this goal the engine capacity was increased to 1077cc thanks to the new cylinder bore which was taken from 78 to 81 mm. This increase in displacement also resulted in higher top performance: the power peak went from 125 to 129kW and places the Tuono V4 1100 range at the top of its segment. It allows this hyper-naked to excel as a complete weapon for thrills and

effectiveness with superlative torque values that dominate on the road and uncompromising top performance to dominate on the track. This is what we found in both environments.

As much as a fairing can help enormously on the track, we were still easily passing more fancied "track bikes" with the new 1100 RR. On the road, the massive spread of both power and torque finds you in a lonely place – kilometres in front of everyone else.



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Ah, loneliness! So if the bet is that the first to the pub gets beers all night – the Tuono 1100 RR will have you showered, relaxed and ready for those frosty treats before most of your other mates turn up!

However, my only gripe with the engine is its low speed throttle response. It is very much on or off and very hard to maintain a “just on” throttle, so as a commuter, the 1100 RR is not the best. But the majority of people who buy a bike like this will only be buying it for the insane power and torque, not to get to work.

Combine this performance with the refined chassis and geometry and you can’t wipe the smile off your face. The amount of feel the front end gives you is superb.

The 1100 RR handles very similarly to its world championship-winning brother – the RSV4.

In order to make the Tuono V4 1100 more agile on the road, though, without losing its fierceness on the track, the headstock angle was changed from 25.1° to 24.7° and the fork advancement went from 30mm to 35mm for a trail reduction from 107.4mm to 99.7mm. These sleeker chassis dimensions combine with the 4mm longer aluminium swingarm and the various suspension setups from Sachs create a rock solid chassis at high speeds but one that is more agile in direction changes. And to that end, in its standard form, the Tuono is all but perfect for the road.

With so much go, you’re going to need a lot whoa! The braking system on the 1100 RR has a pair of refined Brembo monobloc M432 calipers on the front with switchable Race ABS. On the track I preferred the ABS switched off, but on the road I’d have it on level 2, which means that both front and rear can activate, although it does take quite a bit to get the front going.

Developed in collaboration with Bosch, the 9MP system, weighing a mere 2 kg, adopts an intervention strategy called RLM (Rear wheel Lift-up Mitigation) that limits stoppies when braking sharply. It can be disengaged and easily adjusted on all 3 settings by accessing the instrument control menu.

Other electronics are now in their third generation - APRC (Aprilia Performance Ride Control) is the patented control systems package derived directly from the winning technology in the world Superbike championship. As always, the 1100 RR benefits from specifically developed calibration, but it has been evolved even further in order to provide maximum thrills on the road and maximum performance on the track.

Here’s a snapshot of these aids:

**Aprilia Traction Control (aTC):** adjustable on the fly (without having to release the throttle) to 8 settings thanks to practical plus/minus buttons on the left side of the handlebar.

**Aprilia Wheelie Control (aWC):** adjustable to three settings, has been recalibrated to be even more sporty at level one, while still guaranteeing a slight lift in quick acceleration and subsequent smoother descent of the front wheel to the tarmac.

**Aprilia Launch Control (aLC):** for use on the track only, with 3 settings, this has to be one of the easiest launch controls to activate – by holding the plus/minus buttons together until the instrument panel tells you it’s on.

And finally: **Aprilia Quick Shift (aQS):** a system for extremely fast gear changes without shutting the throttle and using the clutch – a must on all bikes, I reckon!

Styling has not been changed, but the two new colours and graphics really make an impact. The bike is available in Portimao grey or Donington blue. The blue looks stunning in direct sunlight and as much as I wasn’t a fan of the grey when I first saw it, after living with it for a couple of weeks it grew on me. But I’d still pick the blue.

Accessories are extensive, from performance to bling and even a tankbag, you can even get Aprilia’s new V4-MP multimedia platform.

Aprilia really has stepped it up in the hyper-naked world with this new Tuono 1100 RR. Every time I rode it, I was giggling at how much fun it is to ride. Just don’t giggle too loudly, otherwise those boys in blue will be shaking their finger at you. ●



## SPECS

### APRILIA TUONO 1100 RR

PRICE: \$23,000 (ride away)

WARRANTY: Two years, unlimited distance

SERVICING INTERVALS: Every 10,000km or 12 months

ENGINE: Liquid-cooled V4 cylinder, 4-stroke, DOHC, 4 valves per cylinder

BORE x STROKE: 81 x 52.3mm

DISPLACEMENT: 1077cc

COMPRESSION: 13.5:1

POWER: 129kW @ 13,000rpm

TORQUE: 121Nm @ 10,500rpm

TRANSMISSION: 6-speed, wet multi-plate slipper clutch, chain final drive

SUSPENSION: Front, 43mm inverted fork, adjustable preload, compression and rebound, travel 120mm.

Rear, monoshock, adjustable preload, compression and rebound, travel 130mm.

DIMENSIONS: Seat height 825mm, weight 184kg (dry), fuel capacity 18.5 litres, wheelbase mm

TYRES: Front, 120/70/ZR17.

Rear, 200/55/ZR17

FRAME: Aluminium perimeter

BRAKES: Front, twin 320mm discs with monobloc radial mount four-piston switchable ABS calipers. Rear, 220mm disc, dual-piston switchable ABS caliper.

FUEL CONSUMPTION: 8.14 litres per 100km, premium unleaded

THEORETICAL RANGE: 227km

COLOURS: Portimao Grey, Donington Blue

VERDICT: GIGGLE LIKE A KID IN A LOLLY SHOP!



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# DAY RIDE OUT OF MELBOURNE

ONCE AROUND THE RESERVOIR **WORDS/PHOTOS** THE BEAR

The old joke that the best thing about Melbourne is the Hume Highway leading out of it is of course rubbish. There are many terrific roads leading out of Melbourne...

When I lived down there, one of my favourites for a run was the Maroondah Highway. It leads to a wonderful variety of roads and byways that stretch all the way from the Princes to the Hume highways, and that wedge of country contains just about every kind of riding there is. Except desert, I guess.

This ride is a loop around Lake Eildon, and it starts and ends on Maroondah Highway at Ringwood – as good a place as any to begin or end any ride.

Just follow the Maroondah Highway out of town. It will take you out through Healesville, past the Maroondah Reservoir and then over a wonderful forest road to the Black Spur, past the Fernshaw Reserve. Just over the other side of the range is Narbethong, with its motorcycle-friendly pub. If you have a bit of extra time, please take the detour to Marysville. In many ways the place has recovered from the disastrous

fires, but it can still use a bit of help – and it's a nice place anyway. Skip the big take-a-number bakery on the corner and have your coffee at the pleasant small café next door.

Turn right at Taggerty and right again at the T-junction where you return to the Maroondah Highway, and then finally leave it just before Eildon, past Snobs Creek. You're on a terrific road through hills and valleys here, crossing the Big River (um, not all that accurately named) and finally reaching the Jamieson River and another T-intersection. Turn right for Jamieson, left for Howqua. That's the way we're going.

While I think of it, keep an eye out for moss growing on the road. It's visible, although not easily, as a thin film of green. I don't know anyone who's come off on this stuff but I have run my boots over it and found it noticeably more slippery than the unaffected road surface. As well as that, wildlife is pretty common out along much of this trip, and where it ain't wild it can be tame: occasionally cows or sheep do get through the fences. These days I suppose we need to look out for llamas and such, as well. At night, you can add foxes to the list.







Just before the bridge over the Jamieson, there is a brewery on your left. Yes, really. Called the Jamieson Brewery, it's part of the Lakeside Hotel/Motel. It has some interesting beers, too.

We will, of course, eschew the consumption of alcoholic liquors and will instead continue north through Howqua and across the Blue Range to Mansfield. This is a pleasant, spacious little town and here we re-join the Maroondah Highway – at its other end. The highway is not exactly exciting here but it's a pleasant enough ride through grazing country.

At Merton the road turns south and we follow it past Yarck, but then bear right at the intersection of the Goulburn Valley Highway and the Maroondah, swapping over to the former. Not that we stay on it long; at Yea, another nice, spacious town with several cafés and restaurants as well as a good pub, we turn left into the Melba Highway. This is a relatively undemanding but nevertheless enjoyable road which will eventually take you back to (guess where) the Maroondah Highway, which you can then follow back to Ringwood. Job done, day spent very enjoyably.

Ringwood to Ringwood is some 350km; that makes it about a five hour ride, depending on how long you stop and how often. ●

*Clockwise from left: Not all of the towns up here are doing well. Spend a few bucks and help them out. / Notice that the bike in the sign has swapped ends? Staying upright while doing that is pretty good riding! / Can you see the green shine on the tar? The ranges are infested with this slippery stuff. / No they don't. As far as I've seen, they don't drive at all. They run. In front of you.*





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# SEE THE LIGHT

AND YOU'LL KNOW  
WHY WE RIDE

WORDS THE BEAR

PHOTO COLIN WHELAN

“ On the road again  
Goin' places that  
I've never been.  
Seein' things that I  
may never see again... ”  
*Willie Nelson*







Why do we ride, why do we ride... I remember a night on my old WLA Harley, the first one I owned, the red one. I was on my way to Melbourne to attend a national meeting of the Intervarsity Jazz Society, of all things, but truth be known it was more that I was looking forward to seeing a certain Melburnian young lady. It was about 2am on a cloudy night and I was somewhere near Goulburn, freezing and trying to avoid frosty patches on the road, when my headlight globe blew. High beam had blown some time before, so I was now not only damp and cold but also effectively blind.

I pulled over onto the barely visible soft shoulder, and couldn't help myself: I just started laughing like a lunatic. Nearly dropped the bike, not that that would have mattered; it had the ubiquitous crash bars which not only really did protect the bike but also made it ridiculously easy to pick up if it fell over.

My mate on the back was used to my weird behaviour, but even he got a little worried.

"Are you all right?" he said, and all I could do through the gusts of laughter was nod and grunt. Yes, I was all right.

We completed the ride into Goulburn in the headlights of a convenient semi, and found a new globe at the very last servo in town. Once again, I could see the light...

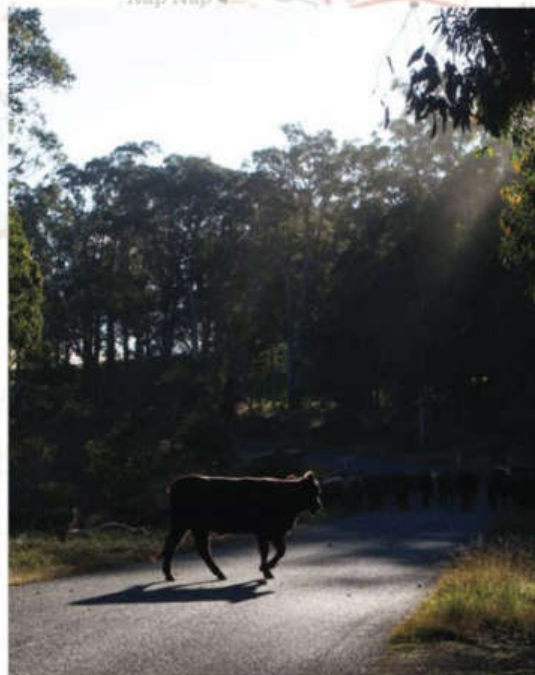
Have you ever wondered why one of the most popular purchases by recently divorced men is – a motorcycle? No, me neither. It's obvious, isn't it? The bike is a badge of freedom and a promise of pleasure to come. Please note that I'm by no means in favour of divorce; after all, the majority of people who are married to motorcyclists don't mind them having a bike.

But the divorce/bike coincidence is meaningful. Motorcycles are not just means of transport or even declarations of potency from middle-aged males. Motorcycles offer ways of exploring the world and ourselves. Motorcycles offer freedom.

Colin's wonderful photo of his bike in front of a fog bank is so powerful it almost hurts. I wish I could be there, ready to jump on the bike and find out what's hiding behind that fog. Just follow that dirt road and maybe come to one of those magic places that exist all over the country – but that are only reachable by bike. Oh, sure, you could drive there by car. But in a car you'd be past the spot before you even had time to recognise and acknowledge it. On a bike you'll see it and, more importantly, feel it. The magic can work because you're open to it.

And listen, don't worry if the above seems like twaddle to you. One day you'll see what I mean, maybe quite unexpectedly; or maybe you won't. It doesn't matter. Just keep riding into those fog banks. ●





# MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY

PART 3 OF OUR ALTERNATIVE PATH NORTH WORDS/PHOTOS COLIN WHELAN

## COFFS HARBOUR

The last big town on the highway with no bypass. The Tourist Office is in the west, just north of Combine St (the 2nd Coramba Turn) as you arrive in the town. They have no biker specific information. There's a huge IGA on Park Ave, right at the next set of lights up north of the Info Office. Two good bike shops in town for anything your bike may need, both on the northern side of town: AllRider Motorcycles (T 026652 3636 Take Beryl St west off the highway) and North Coast V Twins (T 02 6650 4200 Take Orlando east off the h'way). Fuel of all types.

## WOOLGOOLGA

The Guru Nanak Sikh Temple is well worth a visit. Heading north, take the well signed slip road exit for Woolgoolga and then go through the roundabout, under the h'way and follow Solitary Islands Way. You'll see the temple. To rejoin the Pac, put your shoes back on and continue north and the signs will lead you. If you want a longer break, take the east option at the roundabout north of the temple and head to the beach

on Clarence St. You'll see the IGA on Queen just behind the south headland.

## NANA GLEN

The Idle Inn here is one of the most popular biker cafes probably in NSW and with good reason. On the east side of the road through town, run by bikers for bikers, if it were surrounded by crap roads I'd still detour to it, but the riding is another bonus. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

## CORAMBA

The pub here featured a few months back in AMM and the town has a couple of very nice cafes. In the bakery you'll see a pizza oven which the geniuses on Coffs Council forced them to close because it was too popular. Not to worry, their pies are into the excellent range. Small BP just up from the pub.

## GLENREAGH

The Glenreagh General Store serves top hot grub and damn decent coffee.

Very popular with dirt(y) bikers from the surrounding trails. When you open the doors of the Golden Dog Hotel, the smell of those horrible toilet disinfectant tablets hits you like a brick. There're better places around!

## GRAFTON

Plenty of fuel here, much of it on the highway to save going into the town. If you're after a good pub feed, the new Clocktower Hotel on the main town drag is very nice. Grafton Motorcycles is just over the first roundabout when you come in from Glenreagh. (T: 02 6642 1154)

## ULMARRA

The Commercial Pub backs onto the Clarence River and its beer garden is idyllic. The bar doubles as a café serving good caffeine and decent cookies. The full menu is comprehensive and the service is top notch. What more do you want from an R&R spot? Just head west at the Post Office/General Store/Servo and stop before you hit water!





## BROADWATER

A couple of break options here: If you want to sit outside in a beautiful garden or veranda and made to feel you are imposing on the serenity of the curt staff, then head for Melba's Veranda Café. If however you want to refresh in a beautiful building, chowing on homemade goodies served by top folks, best to head to church! Our Daily Bread Café on the north end of town is run by Alannah and David, is open 9.00 til 3.00 every day 'cept holidays and the new bitumen driveway makes parking your ride a piece of cake.

## NEWRYBAR

Very easy to slip past this one. It is signposted from the south so keep your eyes out about 15kms north of the Bruxner Highway intersection for the township to the west. Harvest Café is a very classy café/restaurant in beautifully restored buildings and surrounded by some interesting shopping. Rejoining is easy, just continue north and blend back onto the Pac.

## KYOGLÉ

Probably the most helpful, honest and knowledgeable Tourist Office in the state is at the north end of town whilst a Super IGA is on the western side of the main street and Jenny's Café on the other side will fix up

belly rumblings. The Caltex and BP are at the top end of town.  
[www.visitkyogle.com.au](http://www.visitkyogle.com.au)

## CAWONGLA

There's a very good standalone general store and café here on the south side of the Kyogle Rd just to the east of Cawongla Rd. Good people doing good stuff! (especially the pizzas on weekends! T: 02 6633 7090)

## LISMORE

Lismore Motorcycles is on the Bruxner at South Lismore near the airport (T: 02 6621 8553). Miss Lizzies on Woodlark and The Bank on Molesworth are the best cafes I've tried here. The BP on the corner of Dawson and Conway sells all grades of fuel.

## NIMBIN

Nimbin is Nimbin.

## UKI

The best bit of news in this entire article is the re-opening of the Mt Warning Pub. After being burned down in February 2013, it re-opened in mid-August and had a great Welcome Back Party on the first Weekend of September. If you're after something a bit

more upmarket, get over to Mavis's Kitchen on Mt Warning Road. One of the classiest places around, based in a stunning old Queenslander that was trucked in from the Gold Coast. (head east out of town for 3kms and follow sign left. ([www.maviseskitchen.com.au](http://www.maviseskitchen.com.au)))

## MURWILLUMBAH

Best grub is found along Murwillumbah and Wharf streets and the Info Centre is over the Tweed and in the park to the east of the main town and the BP is a bit further up this road. If you're coming up on the Tweed Valley Way, a couple of km short of the town you'll see the Tweed Regional Art Gallery to your west. Plenty of parking and the option to refresh with great views over the Tweed Valley but it's closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

## ROCK VALLEY

This has the smallest Post Office in Australia and a few years back it was picked up and taken down the road to its current location. Worth a stop! As ever, thanks to my HR department for the continuing motivation.

*For more notes on other towns and a fully detailed downloadable .gpx map please see the Ride Guide Section of [www.motorbikenation.com](http://www.motorbikenation.com) ●*



# NORSE COURSE

THE BEAR CHECKS OUT THE LANDS OF  
HIS ANCESTORS **WORDS/PHOTOS** THE BEAR

“ Kine die, kinfolk die,  
and last of all yourself.  
This I know that never dies:  
How dead men's  
deeds are deemed. ”  
*Elder Edda*

*In some places the incline is so steep that road builders had to include loops. This one has been bypassed, but remains as a photo backdrop for motorcyclists...*



Pretty serious stuff. And we've only just started on the major Eddas, haven't even got to Beowulf. Surely there is a more light-hearted way of dealing with Scandinavia?

It certainly seems like it as I roll through southern Sweden from Göteborg along the E45 towards Trollhättan (Sweden's Hollywood, if

there can be such a thing) and further north, among bright, sunny fields that could hardly be more green and lush. Why would anyone be mad enough to go viking (yes, it's a verb too) when his home acres looked like this and promised such an ample harvest?





Why indeed. The reasons are complex and include things like the seasonal nature of Norse lives, population pressure, the attitudes fostered by their religion, the need for gifts to exchange in guesting rituals, and of course the opportunity to have some fun. But going viking also kickstarted many trading networks. And the Vikings did a lot of trading; they even had special vessels, quite different from their longships, to carry goods. Called knarrir (singular knarr), they were broader in the beam and more reliant on sails.

But so what? I'm not reliant on sails on the Edelweiss Bike Travel BMW F 700 GS, the bike that has rapidly become my favourite in the rental fleets of the world.

## THROUGH THE SPAGHETTI

Getting out of Göteborg is a nightmare through roadworks "spaghetti", as Italian-born Manuel, our Edelweiss tour guide, describes it. But now he has found some wonderful scenic country roads for us, lined with brilliantly flowering lupins, and even a stop at a Moose Ranch can't disturb my happy disposition. Er... why should it? Well, moose (Meece? Mooseseses?) are large, lugubrious-looking and smelly, and if you ever hit one on a bike you can say your old age pension goodbye. I will buy a moose (or rather elk) leather wallet later.



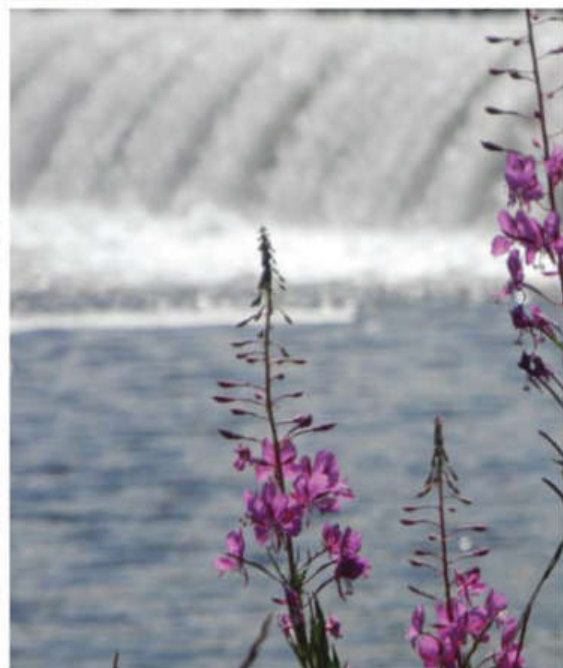
*Clockwise from top left: Most Norwegian roads are excellent, and just made for motorcycles. / Displays in the Viking Ship Museum give a good idea of the shipbuilders' art. / Telemark is full of lakes, many of them used as part of the famous canal. / In the German vernacular, the accordion is called the "sailors' piano". This bloke in Alesund was good. / Dalsnibba, one of Norway's highest roads, also has a wonderful lookout over Geirangerfjord. / Ferries are still common on the fjords, but tunnel building will make many redundant. / Just a road somewhere up in the mountains; you can see the good surface. / The roof of one of the many wooden churches scattered throughout Norway.*















We follow the shores of the huge lake Vänern for a while and then cut across country to the Norwegian border. The signposting of the border is somewhat less noticeable than the littering signs – just a small board that says “Norway”. Ah, the very place we were looking for!

It’s mainly freeway (or rather tollway, but bikes are free) from here to Oslo, and once we’ve had a look at the futuristic-looking ski jump left over from some Olympics or other we slip over to our hotel, which is (partly) an historic wooden building, high over the city. Dinner that night is a buffet, as most of them turn out to be, and is wonderful. But then I am very fond of gravlax and various types of pickled herring; my ancestry is asserting itself.

“Pay attention; I will say this just once...” beer is staggeringly expensive at nearly \$15 a half litre. I will not mention this again; it still gives me stomach cramps.

The next day is a rest day, and I take the opportunity to visit the wonderful cross-shaped Viking Ship Museum which I could see far below from the front veranda of the hotel. It isn’t cross-shaped because it has any Christian relevance; the shape accommodates the four longships it holds, along with various paraphernalia. It’s a remarkable place, not least for the fact that the curatorial staff is quite prepared to



*Clockwise from top left: Alesund, showing some of the art nouveau buildings – but sadly also some of the others. / Riding across a waterfall can easily soak you like a shower of rain. / Our hotel in Oslo was a beautiful old wooden building high over the city. / Your life or your lupins! The weir in the background holds water for the Telemark Canal. / Looking down from the amazingly steep Stahlheim road into one of the fjords. / Hearty fish paella is only one of the tasty dishes available at the open air market in Bergen. / Many motorcycle tourists visit Norway, both on solos and outfits or trikes.*



**“Bears on bike tours? Ridiculous!”**

## Bring the Bearalong

My ancestry on my Father’s side is Scandinavian, which gave this a bit of an extra thrill. Getting to Norway is not especially difficult, or especially expensive. You can fly with SAS, for example, which offers joint services with other airlines (linking to its network outside Australia) and will take you to Göteborg via Copenhagen. I flew Qantas to London and then SAS to Göteborg. Australians do not need visas for Norway, and in my experience an Australian motorcycle license is sufficient. Make sure that your travel insurance covers riding large-capacity bikes; I use Travel Insurance Direct. I rode the Viking Experience tour as a guest of Edelweiss.

admit that the ships were originally preserved in an inferior way, and they are now deteriorating. One of the main purposes of the museum is to find a better way – fast. I believe they have also laser scanned everything for 3D reproduction.

In the car park there’s provision for motorcycle parking – and it’s free, unlike the car parking. I could get used to Norway, except for the price of the be... the bee... aargh. Oh, and the blood alcohol level for road users, which is zero.

I ride around the peninsula which holds the museum, and I can smell the money. You know how you can always tell when you’re in a wealthy suburb? Most of Oslo feels that way. And why not; the country has \$US800 billion in its sovereign fund. That’s enough for how many b... bee... aargh.





That evening I'm sitting on the hotel veranda sipping an oddly flat Ringnes Lager and familiarising myself with the others on the tour. The second guide is an ex-military Dutchman called Ted, and the life of the party is a Canadian, Norm, who's on the tour with his American mate John. Sebastian is German, Fabio and Fatima are Brazilian and Izi is from Turkey. He confides to me that he has an R 1200 GS back home in Istanbul because that will get him out of the city when the next earthquake strikes, when a car wouldn't. Hard to argue with that!

## COOL TO BE A CAT

As I sit there with my beer, checking out all the old Hueys (they're actually Bell 412s) fluttering around in the air above Oslo (they were there last time, too) I keep thinking – what a shame that I don't have a few more lives, like a cat. There are so many places left to ride...

We are warned about the heavy traffic next morning, heading south on the motorway. Hmm. Maybe the meaning of the word "heavy" changes as you get closer to the Pole, but in fact we slip through the moderately busy multi-lane road to Drammen, where we turn off towards Telemark and Numedal. In many countries this would be a transport stage, but there are few of those in Norway. There is always something to see and admire, even if it's just another transport medium – like, in this case, the Telemark Canal. Built effectively by hand, with the use of a minimum of machines, the canal connects Dalen on the North Sea with Skien on the Skagerrak, south of Oslo – with the judicious use of lakes along the way, and 18 locks.

This is picture book country, popular with the locals for summer holidays, but I manage to ruffle one bloke's feathers when I suggest that the comic book characters the Moomintrolls might pop out of the undergrowth at any moment.

"Moomintrolls are Finnish," he (almost) snaps at me.

"No, I saw them in the newspaper at the hotel," I say, misunderstanding.

"Not finished; from Finland," he corrects me and shakes his head. This is about as aggressive as Norwegians seem to get. Mind you, they hold a grudge.

Take one of the major attractions in Bergen, which we will reach in a couple of days: the funicular railway to the top of the hill overlooking the town. It was built after the First World War, and the train carriages were ordered from Germany in a deal written in German Reichsmark. Then mega-inflation hit Germany – but the factory stayed true to the contract and delivered the carriages for an amount that would literally (sic) not even have bought a box of matches. Fast forward to WW2: the Germans invaded Norway and put some anti-aircraft guns on top of that hill. Naturally they used the funicular to move troops and supplies up and down.

Without buying tickets, it seems. The outrage lingers today. But we're not in Bergen yet.

The weather shifts a bit as we cross the immensely scenic spine of the Norwegian peninsula, and the sky darkens. But we nevertheless enjoy the often stark and powerful scenery. We follow the Lysefjord, one of Norway's major fjords, and tackle its kilometre-high wall with 27 hairpin bends on the near vertical cliff.

Daily rides will prove to be quite long, and that's partly because there is a lot to see along the way. The afternoon of this day is just about the only exception; the ride out to our hotel just south of Stavanger on the coast is a bit of a transport stage. Mind you, the nautical Straand hotel makes up for a lot; my bedroom is just like a ship's cabin and the whole place is relatively small and cosy and right on the beach. Even though you can't see it. I cross the dunes and surprisingly find several people mucking about on the sand in the heavy fog. There are others sitting outside on the hotel veranda wrapped in blankets.

A query to one of the hotel staff – "Are they enjoying the fog?" yields a serious answer. "They are enjoying that there is no rain." Ah. It does apparently rain for 265 days a year – almost like

Strahan in Tasmania – so I suppose that's reasonable enough.

## TO BERGEN, UNDERGROUND

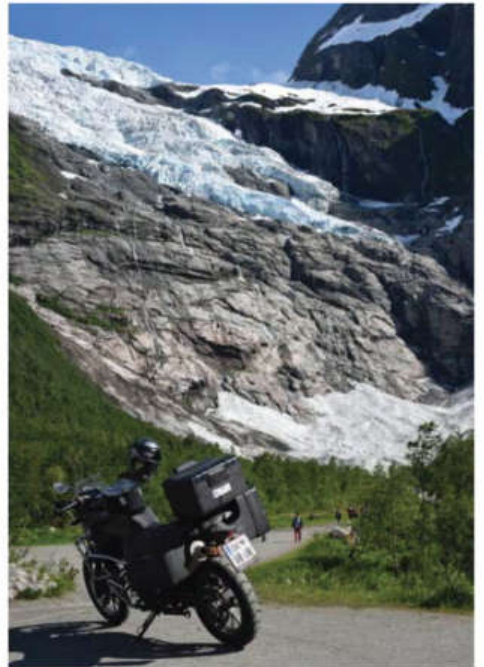
Rain greets us in the morning, although it's not terribly heavy. We pass Stavanger, Norway's fourth-largest city with a population of 122,000 and made prosperous first by tinned herrings and then by offshore oil. You can get an idea of the relative population density by the fact that Perth, Australia's fourth-largest city, has a population of more than two million. Norway has just over five million people all up, in a total area of 385,000 square kilometres. Roughly the same number of people as Greater Sydney, in an area about half as big again as Victoria. You might think that there would be people everywhere, but in fact large stretches of Norway are just about empty – and that makes them all the more beautiful.

We saw plenty of that beauty on this day's ride; the intermittent rain didn't matter much because it did little if anything to hide the views. A lot of the time you're out of the rain anyway because you're in a tunnel. The Norwegian government has not stinted on road funding, and there are tunnels everywhere. The tunnel that leads to the spectacular new Hardanger Bridge boasts two roundabouts, right in the belly of the mountains and lit the same eerie blue that Australian public toilets



*Clockwise from top: Izi passes one of the unfortunately almost endless lines of Armco fencing. / It seems to have shrunk considerably, but we can still see the remnants of this great glacier. / Fully equipped to go skiing, this scooter was "parked" in the Oslo hotel's lobby. / The power of water is never as obvious as in a waterfall; there are plenty of examples. ? Um – hello? The fog got even thicker than this on our way across one of the ranges.*









use to make it impossible for addicts to find veins. I cannot imagine that that was what the Norwegian road builders had in mind!

I can't help taking the piss out of our serious and ever-helpful guides. "Not much further to Bergen," Manuel says at one stage. "Maybe an hour." I pop up with, "Is any of it above ground?" He's not quite sure how to take that; sorry, Manuel, it was a joke...

When we arrive, we put the bikes in a gigantic and brand-new underground (of course) parking garage. Manuel has told us that the hotel is directly across the street from the garage exit, so it comes as something of a surprise that he then conducts us on a pretty extensive walking tour of Bergen. He's got himself turned around, and left by the wrong exit. This is one of the very

few times when anybody complains, as a rebellious voice mutters, "It seems that 'right across the road' means 'nowhere bloody near' in Italian..."

Bergen is a very pretty place that suffers from too much tourist exposure, mainly by cruise ships. While the people in the open air market are clearly locals – both buying and selling – the staff in the restaurants and bars appears to be almost entirely sourced from backpackers. Backpackers who come from Melbourne. That can be quite charming when you can chat with your waitress about the Cats' chances for the pennant this year, but it's less so when people don't know their jobs. I ordered a bratwurst at one restaurant that arrived so undercooked that it resembled sausage meat in a condom.

While I'm getting over this culinary marvel, I notice that a small fishing boat called "Heineken" is delivering cases to the fish market across the water. So they catch it at sea, eh? Bet you, like me, thought they made it in a brewery.

The old Hanseatic quarter, consisting of a dozen or so wooden buildings, is terrific. The front shops sell the usual tourist crap, but as you penetrate further you start to find artists and artisans who are selling things they have made themselves. I bought a beautiful pair of silver and copper earrings for Mrs Bear, from the artist herself.

All in all, Bergen is worth visiting. Just don't expect too much of an authentic experience. And by all means take the funicular railway,





but make sure you buy a ticket – and don't talk with a German accent. And stay away from the bratwurst.

## NO-PANTS BEAR AND THE LOCAL BREW

So, having dumped on Bergen, let's see what the rest of Norway has to offer. This is a wonderful day's ride, even including some more tunnels, and we end up in a small hotel in Fjaerland with which everyone immediately falls in love. They have their own beer, brewed for them at a craft brewery down the valley, but – get this – made with their own water, transported down to the brewery. That's style. Sadly, I am not able to equal the hotel's stylishness.

Our van, with our luggage, has been delayed and we only have our

*Clockwise from top left: Bergen's Hanseatic quarter from across the busy harbour. / It isn't just Trollstigen that offers seemingly endless hairpins, a boon for bikes. / The late thaw meant that more snow and ice remained than usual. / See what I mean about Armco fencing? At least it does end some time!*

motorcycle clothing to wear. Much as I like my BMW suit, I draw the line at that and press one of the hotel's towels into use as a kilt. Well, it were kilt according to me... I didn't really notice, but it appears that I scandalised a few other, older (?) guests. In vain I maintain that I am a Blank Scotsman, wearing my white clan tartan. Some of my fellow riders are introduced to akvavit that evening, and regret it in the morning, I suspect.



*The Straand Hotel's figurehead appears to be La Stupenda, Dame Joan Sutherland.*

## Edelweiss Bike Travel

Based in Austria, Edelweiss Bike Travel claims to be the largest motorcycle tour operator in the world. I have no reason to doubt them; their range of tours is phenomenal. There are two different kinds of guided motorcycle tours: those conducted by the owners (like Beach's, GAMT and Ferris Wheels) and those run by hired help (like Compass and Edelweiss). Each of course covers different types of terrain, too. For the kinds of routes it covers, I think Edelweiss is the best. I have found the company to be highly customer-focused and well organised, with professional and helpful guides. Among other things, the key to your room is waiting for you when you arrive at the hotel, and your luggage is in your room. After a hot/cold/wet/dry day on the road, that is a welcome treat.

One of the other advantages of travelling with an organised tour is that you have pre-paid most things, and can therefore stay in classy and nice hotels without worrying what it's costing you! With Edelweiss, the bike, hotels and most meals are included in the tour price; the main expense that isn't, is fuel.

This tour costs approximately US\$6500; in my opinion, its value and the value of other Edelweiss tours is high. Of course the bastard Australian dollar makes everything more expensive than it was. Edelweiss Bike Travel is at Sportplatzweg 14, 6414 Mieming, Austria. +43 5264 5690, [worldtours@edelweissbike.com](mailto:worldtours@edelweissbike.com), [www.edelweissbike.com](http://www.edelweissbike.com).





Love both the Glacier Centre and the little pub in Fjaerland; if you find yourself in the area, you can't miss either of them: the former has full-sized mammoths out front and the latter is the only pub in town. Don't forget to try that "local" beer; you can try drinking some of the water as a direct comparison!

One of the absolute highlights of the entire trip is on the following day: the short diversion to the hotel at Stahlheim. It seems that it took seven years from 1842 to build the six mile road with its 13 hairpins and 20 per cent grade. The view from the top, and from the road on the way down, is spectacular.

You might think that all the tunnels would make the ride less interesting, and in fact we did bypass the 24.5

kilometre Laerdale road tunnel (the longest in the world) by taking the route across the top of the range, on the original road. Riding through snow that's piled up at twice the height of you and your bike can be a sobering experience, especially when the air above the road is filled with fog – or rather cloud! The Edelweiss route notes describe it as "tundra and barren rocks; Arctic Norway on a small and twisty road." It is a huge amount of fun, especially when we stop for a snowball fight and a few snow angels by the side of the road.

Our guides seem to have an unerring instinct for choosing between the alternatives, above or below ground. The tunnels often add to the interest; disappearing into one solid rock wall and then emerging from another into

*Clockwise from left: Yes, there is a rider in this photo – you can pick him by his safety jacket. / Many old roads, superseded by tunnels or highways, are still open. / There must be hundreds and hundreds of hairpins in Norway, but they're all different. / An iron chandelier in the famous tiny bur spectacularly beautiful Rose Church.*

a different valley is quite a surprising experience. The weather quite often changes, too. That's good in this case, as it picks up noticeably after one of our underground excursions. We stop for coffee, and to admire the varying scenery. The small roadside cafés are mainly staffed by teenage girls who are every bit as competent and confident as teenage girls seem to be around the world.



# DISCOVER CUBA

## HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ Mural de la Prehistoria
- ★ Viñales Valley
- ★ Las Terrazas
- ★ Bay of Pigs
- ★ Topes de Collantes
- ★ Che Guevara Mausoleum
- ★ Valle de los Ingenios

## TOUR GRADING

ROUTE: moderate  
HOURS: 6 to 8 h

## AT A GLANCE

START/FINISH: Havana  
NEAREST AIRPORT: Havana  
DURATION: 11 (CKU) / 8 (CCB) days vacation,  
9 (CKU) / 6 (CCB) riding days  
ROUTE: Daily rides 50 - 260 miles  
(80 - 420 km). The entire route runs on  
good asphalt roads.  
ACCOMMODATIONS: Comfortable middle-  
class hotels, some with historic flair.  
REST DAYS: Havana, Viñales, Trinidad  
No rest days on Best of Cuba tour.

## TOUR DATES

### 2015

Nov 8 - 15 Best of Cuba  
Nov 18 - 28 Classic Cuba

### 2016

Jan 23 - Feb 2 Classic Cuba  
Feb 6 - 13 Best of Cuba  
Feb 14 - 21 Best of Cuba  
Feb 24 - Mar 5 Classic Cuba



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First model. 5500 original miles.  
You won't find better on the planet!



**KAWASAKI Z1300 ★ \$9,500**  
Six banger fun. Tastefully modified. Bike looks,  
rides and sounds even better in the flesh.



**KAWASAKI Z650 ★ \$10,500**  
Beautiful condition, first owner was an  
American General. Rare in Australia.



**HONDA CB72 1962 ★ \$6,500**  
Great club bike, new tyres, fantastic patina.  
Runs sweet as, nothing to do but enjoy.



**HONDA CB550 ★ \$10,500**  
Like new. Fire up the time machine and  
buy a new CB550. This is THAT good.

## OTHER BIKES

**1965 HONDA CD90**  
– Red Riding Hood.

**1979 HONDA CB750** – \$7,500,  
Low miles American import.

**1988 VFR750**  
– Time warp condition.

**1994 VFR750** – V Four Victory.

**1997 SUZUKI VZ800**  
**MARAUDER** – Cruiser style.

**2000 SUZUKI GSF250**  
– Great LAMS four cylinder.

**KAWASAKI Z1300** – \$9,500, Six  
banger fun with some tasteful mods.

## RACE BIKES

**MORIWAKI 80**  
Great junior or bucket racer,  
ready to race.

**HONDA CB500/4**  
Leading Period 4 500 race bike.  
Fast and well built.

## PROJECT BIKES

**SUZUKI RG250 1983**

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## RELEASE THE WATERWORKS!

It seems that the thaw is late and therefore particularly violent this year. There is still ice in high lakes that are usually open by this time of year, and waterfalls are particularly powerful. We see that in more than a few places, with water often spraying more than a hundred metres across and along the roads. Streams are running bankers, but there is no obvious sign of flooding so things can't be all that unusual. It looks spectacular – there is nothing quite like a giant waterfall, especially when you can ride practically inside it.

Just incidentally, my choice of the BMW F 700 GS has justified itself again. The bike is steady in all conditions, even mud, and manageable everywhere. I take a photo of one of the other riders at the beginning of a 15km section of thin mud (the only stretch without tar on the tour), pack the camera, pass him, take his photo again, repack the camera and pass him again before the end. I'm usually the careful one being passed... Maybe I'll have to buy one of these BMWs, one day. When (if?) I can afford it. I liked my G 650 GS.

Although it's hard to believe that this is possible, the scenery keeps getting more rugged and grand. Glacial landscapes tend to be quite huge anyway, and when you get high enough so that there are no trees or even bushes or grass to distract you from the view, they become almost overpowering. "Beauty" isn't really the word any more; perhaps "grandiosity" is better. You need to see this kind of thing to understand just how powerful landscapes can be.

He, he. There was a cruise ship tied up at one of the little ports we passed today, called the "Costa Fortuna". Hardly anyone got the joke. You get it, don't you? Good. That makes me feel better.

So, Geiranger tonight, among some of the most spectacular scenery on the planet. And tomorrow, the road I have been trying to get onto for several years: Trollstigen. But not until we have sampled Norway's best strawberry cake at café Jodaerstova.

## AS EAGLES FLY (OR RIDE)

And even before the strawberry cake, there's Ørnesvingen, or the "Eagles' Road" which takes us up above Geiranger with 11 hairpins and many other turns. A new viewing platform has been built, much more sophisticated than the one I recall from my last visit, and you can walk out over the vertical drop on glass. Um. Okay. Instead of going back down to catch the ferry, we carry on; riding is too much fun.

And then we're in the wide open valley which produces most of the strawberries in Norway, and the café Jodaerstova is right in the middle of it. I will say no more for fear of incriminating myself, but Norwegian strawberries are a revelation to anyone used to our relatively bland ones.

Trollstigen, the "troll's ladder" is next. It is not immediately obvious what the ugly little critters would do with this 2500 foot high road with its elaborate, snake-like and elegant turns. The lookout at the top gives you an opportunity to see practically the entire road, and to marvel at the way many tourist drivers are all over it as they admire the views. A timely warning for motorcyclists. More on Trollstigen at another time.

We also get a look at Trollveggen, the Troll's Wall – at 6000 foot the tallest vertical cliff in Europe. Norway's trolls, by the way, are nothing like the Billygoats Gruff or Lord of the Rings kind of trolls. They're pretty peaceable, if occasionally mischievous, and they're unlikely to turn anyone to stone. If you see one you have probably overindulged in akvavit and forgotten Norway's zero alcohol limit on the road.

One of the wonders of the Norwegian countryside is the contrast between the lush and green fields on the floors of the fjords (where they're not covered by water) and the bleak, imposing stone walls that surround them – and then the rugged country at the top of those walls with its stunted pines and scrubby undergrowth. There is beauty here wherever you look, and Edelweiss has done a good job in finding some of the most spectacular examples.

We now follow Romsdalsfjord, and then cut across country to Alesund, and the end of our tour. Manuel takes us up to the lookout above the town to show us why it's renowned as an art nouveau showpiece; it burned down in the '20s and was rebuilt in the then popular style. It does look good, but unfortunately a lot of less attractive modern buildings are interspersed among the architectural gems. I ask Manuel where our hotel is.

"There," he sadly says, pointing. "The really ugly one..."

But it's comfortable, the way all of our hotels have been, and well located near the pedestrian zone. Handing back the bike keys later that day is a bit of a wrench. There is so much more of Norway to explore. ●





# TUCKED UP OUT OF THE WAY

AND LOOKIN' TRICK



## YAMAHA MT-07

### TRICK BITS AND INSURANCE

This month we decided to clean up some of the ugly areas that any motorcycle will have – the number plate shroud, radiator and coolant bottle. Yamaha has terrific genuine accessories available for the MT-07 which make these areas look super trick. To purchase any of them, or to see the entire range for your bike, visit <https://yshop.yamaha-motor.com.au/bolt-on-products/motorcycle> or your local dealer, but first...

We've now had the MT-07 for ten months and it has been a motorcycle that still brings smiles to my face every





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time I ride it. No matter what super powerful machine I've been riding, I hop on the MT and the instant torque makes me feel all happy inside. There have been no issues whatsoever with the bike, it has run faultlessly. Now that I own the bike it was also time to arrange some insurance.

I contacted one of our advertisers, NEIB Insurance, and spoke with Jeremy. I found him to be very helpful in explaining the differences between the levels of cover they offer, versus some of the other cover available from other brokers out there. The only thing from my side of things is that monthly payments do cost a tiny bit extra. It was nice to talk to a knowledgeable human being, and I recommend giving them a call and seeing what they can do for you and your bike.



## LICENCE PLATE HOLDER (TAIL TIDY)

**Price - \$195.65**

One of the least attractive areas on a motorcycle is often the big ugly guard that sticks out the back. Yamaha has this sorted with an accessory licence plate holder. It replaces the entire plastic piece and is made from stylish aluminium. It does require some "pre-fitting" work before you fix it to the bike. You can decide whether to have a longer middle section, or the short tucked up out of the way arrangement that you see in the photo. On the MT, removal of the standard guard is fairly easy, but the entire job will take at least an hour. I fitted the LED indicators at the same time, so there was some wiring to do as well.



## RADIATOR SIDE COVERS

**Price - \$144.79**

Hiding the radiator as well as possible is always worth doing. Yamaha has milled aluminium side covers for the MT-07 in its accessory lineup and they look super good. Fitment took about ten minutes and the change to the looks of the MT is outstanding (in my humble opinion)!



## COOLANT RESERVOIR COVER

**Price - \$111.76**

To go with the radiator side covers Yamaha also has a matching coolant reservoir cover. It also has milled detail and is made from aluminium. Again, the transformation of the custom look of the bike is outstanding considering that the part took about ten minutes to fit. SW

## CUSTOM, OF THE HIGHEST ORDER RIZOMA PETROL CAP

**Price - \$157.50 Euro**

Continuing the Rizoma awesomeness, we fitted their petrol cap, which is made from billet aluminium and features an anti-tampering key lock system. It was an easy and simple fit, taking about five minutes. You can get the Rizoma fuel caps in two colour version, the black with red details like the one you see here, or a silver one with black detail. An addition well worth fitting to the MT-07 as it attracts a lot of attention from other motorcyclists whenever I'm out.

## RIZOMA OIL FILLER CAP

**Price - \$40.83 Euro**

To match the fuel cap, we went for the Rizoma oil filler cap as well. Again, it's made from machined billet aluminium and the oil filler cap can be used as is, or combined with the little bar with which you can lock-wire the cap to the motorcycle for that exquisite race look. This particular cap is available in five colours to suit all bikes. Grab all of Rizoma's amazing products from the many dealers in Australia, or visit [www.rizoma.com](http://www.rizoma.com) SW ●



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# SUMMER GEAR GUIDE

COOL AS, BRO! COMPILED BY STUART WOODBURY

Yep, things can happen pretty fast in summer, so make sure you're safely dressed. Staying 'cool as' on the bike is paramount, and usually, if you have the right gear for the warmer months your riding will be enjoyable as can be.

Readers have left us in no doubt that these product surveys are popular. Many of them have no other (reasonably easy) way of finding out what's on the market. So we asked distributors with summer gear to send us information about their latest and greatest. A number of them missed the cutoff date to get their material to us or were too, er, busy to send it in, so we suggest you give preference to those in this feature. After all, they took the time to show you what they have to offer. SW

**"SUMMER LOVING  
HAD ME A BLAST,  
SUMMER LOVING  
HAPPENED SO FAST"  
– GREASE**





**DRIRIDER** [www.dririder.com.au](http://www.dririder.com.au)

**Apex 3 Air-Flow jacket - \$229.95**

The full mesh zones on the body and inner sleeves allow a high level of air



flow to cool you while riding on those hot summer days. Functionality continues with a removable breathable membrane to protect you against unexpected rain showers. Features CE armour, stretch comfort panels, multiple pockets, plenty of adjustment to tailor your fit and reflective for night riding visibility. Men's: S – 8XL.

**Air-Ride 3 jacket - \$199.95**

Thanks to the full mesh zones on the body and inner sleeves you will enjoy a high level of ventilation on those summer days. There's also once again a removable breathable membrane to protect you against unexpected rain showers.



With stretch panels in the neck, chest, arms and back for comfort the Air-Ride 3 jacket will be your trusty summer companion. Men's sizes XS – 8XL, nine colour choices. Ladies sizes: 8 – 22, three colour choices.

**EXO 2 jacket - \$399.95**

Next generation Sports jacket designed to be extremely comfortable with a high level of flexibility to move around on the bike



in any season. Multi-tiered defence with hi-tenacity mesh and leather EXO shell, reinforced internally with CE certified D3O impact. Available sizes: Black/Black XS – 8XL, Black/White XS – 6XL.

**Airstream Ladies jacket - \$279.95**

The full mesh zones on the body and inner sleeves allow a high level of ventilation while you're coping with those



hot summer days. Functionality includes a removable waterproof and breathable membrane to protect you against rain and a detachable thermal liner. Features CE Armour, stretch comfort panels, multiple pockets, plenty of adjustment to tailor your fit and reflective for night riding visibility. Sizes: 8 – 22.

**Jewel 2 Air Ladies jacket - \$339.95**

Premium girls' summer jacket constructed in polyester 900D and hi-tenacity mesh for cool summer riding and versatile enough to wear all year round. When the weather turns there is plush



thermal liner with aluminium inserts for extra warmth and a waterproof liner to protect against those unexpected rain showers. Both liners are easily inserted or removed to suit the weather. Available in Black/ Pink & Black/White and sizes 8 – 22.

**BMW MOTORRAD** See your local dealer or [www.bmwmotorrad.com.au](http://www.bmwmotorrad.com.au)

**Airflow Suit - \$850 jacket, \$580 pants**

With its two-piece summer touring AirFlow suit for ladies and men, BMW



Motorrad shows how it's done. Thanks to AirTex mesh lining in the chest, arm and upper thigh area, as well as eyelet lining, the AirFlow suit makes for a distinctly cool feeling when riding. Jacket available in Black, Grey/Red and pants in Black, Grey. Sizes range from Ladies 34–48, Men 46–66, 46–60 (Grey).

**Airflow boots - \$340, overboot - \$120**

The AirFlow is a lightweight ankle-boot with excellent ventilation – the closest



you can get to feeling as if you're wearing sandals in the saddle. Even when the air is hazy with the heat and sweat drops evaporate as soon as they hit the ground, the AirFlow uses air circulation to keep feet cool and comfortable. And should a shower appear to help cool things down then you have the best protection available from the AirFlow over boot with its waterproof and dirt-repellent design.

**Venting Suit - \$600 jacket, \$480 pants**



The fashionable Venting summer suit is ideal for urban riding and short distances. At midsummer temperatures the Venting



suit always offers excellent air circulation even when riding slowly thanks to its optimal ventilation. Abrasion-resistant upper material and removable protectors provide for a high level of safety. Sizes – Ladies 34–48, Men 46–60.

#### Airshell jacket - \$950

Keep things light and airy at the height of summer, and then warm and dry in spring and autumn: this lightweight



jacket is incredibly versatile and is ideal for city traffic with its neon colouring. The bright yellow material is a combination of two fabrics – polyamide provides excellent abrasion resistance, while polyester prevents discoloration. Sizes – Ladies 34–48, Men 46–60.

**RJAYS** [www.rjays.com.au](http://www.rjays.com.au)

#### Swift jacket - \$199.95

Air mesh summer jacket made from super protective 500 Denier ballistic



nylon. Features a removable Rjays Aquashield membrane liner, removable armour in the elbow, shoulder and back, waist and arm adjusters and a one year warranty. Sizes Ladies and Mens: XS-4XL depending in colour.

#### Octane II jacket - \$189.95

The all new Rjays Octane II Jacket has an air cooling construction making this mesh style jacket extremely breathable while remaining waterproof. Sizes XS-3XL.



#### All Seasons II - \$249.95 - \$269.95

Made with super hi-flow mesh panels, this all-season jacket (with thermal and waterproof liners) can be matched to the



All Season II pants, and this jacket comes in “Stout” sizes for the larger fellas. Sizes range from XS-8XL.

#### Breeze leather jacket - \$319.95

Made from heavy duty leather with full



perforated leather panels and featuring armour and brass zippers. Sizes 38-54.

#### Mistral II leather jacket - \$379.95

Rjays claim this to be one of their best sports type jackets yet. Made from A



grade drum dyed leather with perforated panels to over 90% of the front of the jacket. The jacket also features large ergonomic, body hugging stretch panels across the shoulders, underarms and

elbows to create an extraordinary level of comfort and fit. Sizes 36-52.

#### Bandit gloves - \$59.95

The Bandit glove is a stylishly designed summer vented glove. Ergonomically



constructed to provide ease of movement and lack of restriction whilst riding. Sizes XS-3XL.

#### Express gloves - \$69.95

Super soft genuine leather construction with full perforation for outstanding



ventilation. Sizes XS-3XL – Men's and Ladies.

#### Jet Stream III gloves - \$59.95

100% leather palms and a Nylon air mesh construction for excellent air



flow. Men's and Ladies sizes XS-3XL.

#### Summer II gloves - \$49.95

The Rjays Summer 2 glove is ventilated and super comfortable, ideal for the



rider who likes a simple and lightweight design. Sizes XS-3XL.



### **Ace boots - \$139.95**

These new Rjays Ace boots look as good when they're being worn out on a



Saturday night as they are functional being worn on a motorcycle. A full leather upper with a waterproof and breathable lining, these boots can be worn all day leaving your feet dry and comfortable. Colours black or Nubuck brown and sizes 37-48.

### **Canyon boots - \$179.95**

The all new Rjays Canyon boot is the



perfect summer/all year round Sport Touring boot. This short styled boot is just right for the all-day ride with good protection. Sizes 40-48.

### **Strike boots - \$139.95**



Lace up boots with leather/canvas upper construction, which are also 100% waterproof and breathable with reinforced heel and toe protection and a low cut heel for style and comfort. Sizes 41-48.

### **Urban boots - \$149.95**

The Urban Boot has all the great features of its big brother the Tour-Am in a



shorter style for more air-flow. Available in Men's and Ladies sizes 37-48.

### **TOURATECH**

[www.touratech.com.au](http://www.touratech.com.au) or Ph: 03 5729 5529

### **Companero riding suit - \$1650.01 jacket, \$995.01 pants.**

The centre piece of the Touratech Companero is an airy summer suit, but it combines the benefits of this sporty suit with the comfort of a weatherproof membrane suit – effectively two suits in one. Cordura AFT is used on the front and back of the jacket and the legs of the pants to ensure air flow over a wide area. This comfortable synthetic fibre is state-of-the-art in terms of its tear and wear-resistance properties.



### **Touratech seats - \$ various**

Don't forget your backside when it comes



to riding in the hotter weather; the wide range of Touratech seats will keep your rear cool. The seat construction is based on an open-pored foam core with a spacer fabric around the seat to allow air to flow more easily through the ultra-strong, elastic, waterproof textile cover – just the thing for the hotter months.

### **BULL-IT JEANS [www.cassons.com.au](http://www.cassons.com.au)**

### **Bondi SR6 jeans - \$229.95**

Apart from the usual protective

qualities of jeans like these, the Bondis have a “micro climate” inside - 1mm of airflow using Covec structure and cool mesh liner, which keeps you warm when it's cold and cool in the summer. Available in Men's regular and long, sizes 28-44 and Ladies regular 4-16.



### **Carbon SR6 jeans - \$229.95**

If you like your jeans black, the Carbons are the way to go. Apart from the usual protective qualities of jeans like these, the Carbons also have a “micro climate” inside - 1mm of airflow using Covec structure and cool mesh liner, keeps you warm when it's cold and cool in the summer. Available in Mens regular sizes 30-44.



### **Vintage SR6 jeans - \$229.95**

As with the rest of the SR6 range, these Vintage jeans are just as the name suggests – in a Vintage wash. They also have the “micro climate” inside - 1mm of airflow using Covec structure and cool mesh liner, keeps you warm when it's cold and cool in the summer. Available in Men's regular 28-44, long 28-44 and Ladies 4-16.



### **SCORPION [www.cassons.com.au](http://www.cassons.com.au)**

### **Indy jacket - \$279.95**

A combination of A-grade leather and high strength mesh for ultimate



protection and comfort. Features a waterproof liner and loads of



pockets, including one big enough for a smartphone. Sizes XS-4XL.

**Dakota Air gloves - \$49.95**

100% leather construction with



fully perforated lightweight leather for maximum ventilation, comfort and feel. Mens sizes XS-3XL and Ladies sizes 2XS-XL.

**Outlaw gloves - \$49.95**



An extremely comfortable plain black summer glove designed for the rider who wants feel and protection in a lightweight glove, which features leather palms and nylon uppers. Sizes XS-3XL.

**IXON [www.ficeda.com.au](http://www.ficeda.com.au)**

**Stratus - \$319.95**

Versatile 3 in 1 jacket with 3D mesh panels on front and back, and mesh panels on sleeves, including Ixon's "Air Flow Process" fixed grids



on the back. Available in a number of colour combinations and sizes.

**Pitrace - \$199.95**

2 in 1 sport jacket, which is well vented for summer thanks to mesh panels and a jacket that is also waterproof, breathable



and windproof with its removable inserts. A sporting range of sizing offers more ease and comfort for a variety of sizes. Comes in a number of colour combinations.

**Cooler - \$149.95**

Perfect for summer rides with vented panels on the front, back and sleeves.



The Cooler also has 'cooler' benefits from its sport-style sizing, which offers ease and comfort. Available in a variety of sizes and colour combinations.

**Fueller Air - \$399.95**

A racing styled leather jacket, which



is CE certified and features perforated leather, racing collar, neoprene high neck roll and various adjustments for a great fit. Available in a variety of sizes and colour combinations.

**SEGURA [www.ficeda.com.au](http://www.ficeda.com.au)**

**Fresh - \$199.95**

CE certified ventilating mesh textile



jacket with a fixed mesh liner, featuring height adjustable elbow protectors, waist adjustment and optional CE back protector. Available in black or brown and men's and ladies sizes.

**Classic - \$299.95**

As the name suggests this jacket is made with a 'classic' cotton/polyester



exterior and has a fixed mesh liner and is waterproof and breathable. The jacket is also CE certified and available in black or grey and a variety of sizes.

**Retro - \$649.95**



A high end, top class, top quality leather jacket made from super soft and supple buffalo leather. It comes with a removable thermal liner and has a fixed mesh liner.





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The entire jacket is also CE certified and comes in a variety of colour combinations, sizes and men's and ladies versions.

**Brooke - \$699.95**

The Brooke is another high end leather jacket in the Segura range. Made from



supple cow leather it is waterproof, has a fixed mesh liner, is CE certified and has a removable thermal liner. Available in black and a variety of sizes.

**OXFORD** [www.ficeda.com.au](http://www.ficeda.com.au)

**Mondial - \$399.95**

A waterproof, breathable jacket with



many excellent features including large areas of durable mesh on the outer shell which offers maximum airflow; CE armour and a wide range of adjustments. Available in sizes S-5XL.

**Melbourne Air - \$229.95**

Featuring front and rear air vents, mesh lining, fixed waterproof membrane,



internal smart-phone touch-screen pocket and a removable thermal liner, this is an all-round jacket that comes in a variety of colours and sizes S-4XL.



**Estoril Air - \$189.95**

A mesh jacket that comes with a waterproof liner that can be worn over the top or underneath the jacket. The cuff design allows for under or over glove fitment, there is an internal smartphone touch screen pocket and the suede collar is lined with neoprene for maximum comfort. Available in four colour combinations and sizes S-4XL.

**GAERNE** [www.cassons.com.au](http://www.cassons.com.au)

**G-Urban - \$219.95**

A great casual short boot, just right for use around town for the commuter or for



those just wanting some light protection and a waterproof breathable membrane. Available in sizes 42-48.

**G-Valencia - \$149.95**

A casual boot with soft microfibre for



comfort and a reflective side insert. The lining is breathable for air flow. Available in sizes 42-48.

**G-Voyager - \$249.95**

Gaerne now adds a shoe to the fashion market with their new G-Voyager footwear. It aims to combine the comfort of a casual shoe with the technical equipment of a product from the bike



scene. Available in black, black/white or oiled brown/white and sizes 41-47.

**KAWASAKI** from your local Kawasaki dealer or visit <http://kawasaki.com.au/dealers/find-a-dealer>

**Kawasaki Racing Team World**

**Superbike cap - \$46.73**

The 3D Kawasaki Racing Team embroidery gives astonishing depth and



contrast with the 2D embroidery of 2015 WSBK championship winner, Jonathan Rea's #65 or the #66 of 2013 champion, Tom Sykes.

**Kawasaki Racing Team World**

**Superbike T-Shirt - \$45**

Official Kawasaki Racing Team replica T-shirt made of the finest cotton jersey. High quality printed Kawasaki Racing



Team logos and sponsor logos on the arms. Kawasaki-green piping and mesh side panels to complete the sporty image. (also available in Ladies and Kids).

**Kawasaki Racing Team Flat Snapback cap - \$34.46**

This classic Kawasaki green and black



flat snapback carries the Kawasaki Racing Team logo embroidered on the front and the traditional Ninja logo embroidered on the back and underneath the brim. Combined with green piping on the sides, the quality and detail of this



cap are second to none.

**Kawasaki Racing Team World  
Superbike polo - \$55**

The Kawasaki Racing Team 100% cotton piquet polo uses Kawasaki-green piping to stunning effect. The patched sponsor logos give a luxurious feeling and the



mesh side panels complete the sporty image. Kawasaki branded buttons with black-on-white Kawasaki Racing Team-embossed tape which lines the neck area and gives the absolute finishing touch.

**DAINESE** [www.cassons.com.au](http://www.cassons.com.au)

**Super Fast Pelle Estivo jacket -  
\$799.95**

With 3D-bubble liner air spaces and localised perforation throughout, this is



a leather jacket that aims to keep you cool not only in looks, but temperature as well. Available in three colour combinations and sizes 44-58.

**Air Frazer Tex jacket - \$549.95**

Combine the comfort of fabric with the technical advantages of leather to enjoy riding to the full even when



the temperature rises drastically. An aggressive style and killer looks are

the idea behind the Air Frazer jacket. Available in black and sizes 44-58.

**Super Speed Tex jacket - \$549.95**

The Super Speed Tex claims to set the new standard for summer jackets, designed specifically for sports riding



and with excellent technical content and mesh construction.

Three colour combinations and sizes 44-58.

**City Guard jacket - \$349.95**

A full mesh jacket fitted with the Wave G back protector, chest protection and integrated composite protectors. All protectors are removable for even more



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airflow. Available in sizes S-XL.

**Air Hero gloves - \$139.95**

Combining cowhide leather, a reinforced goatskin palm and polyurethane knuckle protection in a lightweight and fully



ventilated summer glove that achieves a CE rating. Available in men's sizes XS-2XL and ladies XS-L.



**Essential gloves - \$119.95**

As the name suggests this glove is just an everyday essential summer item for excellent airflow to keep your hands cool. Available in sizes XS-3XL.

**MIG gloves - \$129.95**

Modern and refined style, but also practicality and comfort, all distinguish



this glove with polyurethane inserts on the knuckles and excellent ventilation, conceived for summer touring. Available in sizes XS-3XL.

**Drake Super Air Tex pants - \$299.95**

Fully ventilated with large boomerang mesh panels on the thighs, shins and calves, the Super Air Tex pants eliminate steamy moisture build up yet keep your legs protected with composite CE certified knee armour and the light yet durable Dainese quick-dry fabric. Available in sizes 48-58.



**Scarpa Short Shift boots - \$299.95**

With design inspired by the more technical Dainese boots, this



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technical shoe in Lorica is designed for summer city use. It has extensive inserts in breathable material on the upper and 3D Bubble fabric with an air gap to create the correct flow of air around your foot to keep it cool even on the hottest days. Available in sizes 41-46.

#### Street Biker boots - \$249.95

These suede cowhide shoes accommodate tough, highly resistant inserts and provide a perfect blend of fashion and resistance. They have nylon heel protectors and reflective inserts which enhance both active and passive safety factors. The insides are made using



waterproof D-WP materials. Available in men's sizes 42-46 and ladies 37-41.

#### HELD BIKER FASHION

[www.heldaustralia.com.au](http://www.heldaustralia.com.au)

#### Tropic II jacket - \$TBC

This is a lightweight ventilated jacket made with cool mesh panels in the front,



back and arms, a soft collar for comfort and CE armour. Available in a variety of colour combinations and men's sizes S-5XL and ladies DS-D3XL.

#### Air Stream II gloves - \$175



Made with a kangaroo leather perforated palm, mesh and leather upper and Coolmax upper lining, these gloves are made to keep you as cool as possible. Available in sizes 7-12.

#### Kendo protector shirt - \$330

The ultimate in protection and coolness is what you get from the Kendo. Full Sas-Tec protectors throughout and the shirt is made from breathable Lycra mesh panels (80% nylon, 20% spandex) with the lining being made with 3D air



mesh panels (100% polyester) in the back to promote air circulation and a hypoallergenic sweat-wicking mesh covering. Available in sizes S-2XL. ●

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# FADED IN THE VAST

MIDDLETON HOTEL, MIDDLETON QLD  
WORDS/PHOTOS COLIN WHELAN

It was the light that drew me to Middleton. Actually it was the lack of it. It was that and a yarn on the mulga wire saying the pub there was a 'gotta-see'. And because I was camping, I didn't much care that it had no accommodation, apparently there was plenty across the road.

So anyway, I headed down west from Winton, with the ubiquitous gales bashing me at every turn and on every straight. (There ain't too many turns!)





The road from Winton to Middleton sees the country morph from harsh to brutal, from grey to red and back again. New hues come through but the toughness only ever increases. Hughenden is the end of the bush and start of the outback. This is the land of the laconic single finger driver's wave from the hand uppermost on the steering wheel. If

you've been out there you know what I mean... the index finger raised, partly in a kind of "g'day" and partly a salute for being a fellow crazy out here in the Vast.

In the heat of the day I see nothing moving except for three emus midway down and crows and eagles on the regular roadkill which points to a vibrant nightlife - and night

**"AT LEAST  
THE COBB  
& CO WAGON  
OUT FRONT  
OF THIS ONCE  
UPON A TIME  
STAGING POST  
IS REAL!"**



death. There's a few sheep ruminating on not much more than rubble and the occasional bunch of cattle. Most of 'em are greyish white...but I'm not sure whether that's their real colour or if they've just faded.

Five km from Middleton a lone old shack stands solitary on my left. I imagine its history, its story of struggle, fleeting success but then eventual failure. Later at the pub that balloon gets well pricked when I find out it's just a film set from a recent flick. At least the Cobb & Co wagon out front of this once upon a time staging post is real!

The one hundred and sixty km from Winton is mainly single lane tar with a rare wider strip for overtaking. Eventually Middleton materialises from the road mirage. Pub on the right, a weird conglomeration of structures on the left.

Now here's something I find really weird. There's a few, not many but a good few, pubs which are so revered out in the bush that no-one ever parks right out front. Hebel was the first I've noted like that and I've been to a couple of others. Maybe drivers just know everyone's going to want to get a photo of the place but I think it's more some sort of respect. You'd hardly plonk your rig at the gates of St Pauls!

Anyway, seems no-one parks out front of the Middleton Pub and so I choose near the Hilton across the road. Truly!

No-one's too sure who built the Middleton Hilton. I'm pretty certain it wasn't Conrad but when I rock up a gaggle of grey nomads has taken up the lobby and they're swapping the usual stories, myths, breaches of faith, lies, exaggerations, total distortions, fabrications, revelations and a few facts. Actually not sure I heard any of the last.

My kinda folks but since I figure they might be table dancing all night with arthritic ankles and knocked up knees, I decamp over to the annex and shotgun the end part of the veranda.

Then head over to the pub.

It's the second day after the Birdsville Races and I've been dodging endless caravans of caravans since yesterday

and the pub is now filling up with folks smart enough to put it away when the sun gets low. It's going to be a good night.

The Middleton Pub has been run for the last decade by Lester and Val and occasionally their son known only as "Stoney" who also happens to own the Robinson helicopter parked out back.

And just why it's featuring as my Pub of the Month is a total mystery! There's no accommodation, all meals are from frozen, the beer is not cheap, there's no air-con, no pool, no jukebox, no TAB, no Keno, no lockup parking for bikes, and nowhere to keep them out of the rain. Oh and showers are non-existent apart from the one you get from the overhead cistern as you stand at the urinals. These dunnies put the 'rude' into rudimentary.

All of which points to one thing: My carefully worked out evaluation system must be totally screwed!

Anyway, Lester's behind the bar, neatly decked out in his uniform of 100 year old stubbies and blue singlet. No, that's it! If you're waiting on details of his footwear, shirt or jacket, sorry but you might as well wait for the drought to break. (Oh and I lied about the 'neatly' part.)

Val is out the back rummaging through the freezers to see what might be good for tea with occasional appearances to help Lester when things get too busy.

There's no draught here, only cans and it's all served with good humour and a wry grin. Lester's wit is past dry and approaching arid and most enquiries are met with a rapid fire smart-arse answer followed by a more helpful one. And don't even think of asking a question that's etched on the massive wall chart along with both smart and serious answers.

More refugees from Birdsville rock up, the front veranda fills as does the camping at the Hilton and the deck, sorry, 'my' deck over at City Hall. The bar and the balcony fill with characters; for some weird geological reason many of the rocks around here are smoother than the clientele.

Around 5.00pm Val puts word out that those wanting tea should put in











their orders so she can start serving it at 6.00pm. A line of mostly desperate single males forms immediately and they place their preferences from fish 'n' chips, steaks and hamburgers but don't leave names or money.

An hour later the food begins to come out and it all gets repatriated with its owners and people are told how much to pay at the bar and they do because that's the way it is. This goes on for a couple of hours 'til finally Val, totally buggered from a day on her feet, plonks down with our group out front as a few of us get up to clear away all the plates and bottles while she has some well earned.

By now son, Stoney, is working the bar toward the end of one of their busiest days of the year. Over summer this place may see just a handful of people each day, sometimes not that many and it'll be just Lester and Val as Stoney is off rounding cattle in his chopper.

This is the home to the mythical Min Min Lights which Val reckons are nothing more than phosphorescent

gases from the open bore drains, but my main reason for coming apart from the pub was for the deep black sky out here at night. If you want to see the heavens, this is the place to do it.

I go out and set up a camera to capture the pub and the stars and then head back over to camp. A couple of my new neighbours had warned me at the pub that they had a champion snorer in their number and damn me if he wasn't already hard at work!

I shift to the other end of the balcony then go back for my riding plugs. This guy could snore for Australia!

Well before the sparrows have even eaten the stuff that gives them their famed morning flatulence, the lights go on at the pub as Lester puts on a brew and waits for the twice-weekly postman who arrives around 5.30 from the east with food, mail, building supplies and a few other parcels.

We all share a coffee then postie's off, Lester stubs the lights, I get a couple of pre-dawn shots and we all go back to bed for an hour.

Just on sun-up Stoney takes off in the chopper for a day of mustering and the rest of the village begins to rouse. Folks wander across the road for a bacon and egg sanger and some instant coffee. Everyone's in good humour and as they begin to pack the swags and the motorhomers do what they need to, everyone says they'll be back.

They'll be back because this is not about the pub, it's about the building, about Lester and Val, about the Hilton across the strip, about the dust and about the quiet. It's about stars and it's about the people, about history and fun. And it's about perfect.

I didn't even fill out an evaluation form for this place. It would've been a shocker. Just go there! Take a swag and sleep over at the Hilton or City Hall and like that ad for I think Pringles says, just try to just going there only once!

So, a big "N/A" on the Motorcycle Friendly Scale but a 5/5 for Unique Character and stubbies of XXXX are \$5.50, for the bar price index! ●



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## TWICE AS GOOD?

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**Dririder Climate Control**

**EXO 2 jacket**

**Price - \$399.95**

I had the pleasure of getting the original version of Dririder's Climate Control EXO jacket when it was first released a few years ago - I wore it to death. It was comfy and really suited what I was looking for in an everyday jacket. Roll on to the latest updated version from Dririder, the Climate Control EXO 2 jacket which provides more safety and features than ever

before. The major feature that's different between the original EXO jacket, which was mostly of a hi tenacity mesh, is that this second version has leather panels on the shoulder and forearm areas. This increases crash protection hugely. You also get CE certified D3O armour for the shoulders and elbows, which is supremely comfortable compared to normal foam armour. The back protector is just made from high density foam, but you can get an accessory D3O item for \$39.95.

Rather than the snap type arm adjusters on the original version, the

new EXO 2 gets Velcro adjustable forearm and biceps. This makes it suitable for a wider range of arm sizes and ultimately makes for a more comfortable jacket, as you can adjust it just right for each arm.

The EXO 2 has zip out waterproof and 85 gram thermal winter linings and I wore this jacket on the recent Suzuki GSX-S launch, where the temperature got down to around zero, or just below. I did have both the waterproof and thermal linings in, but while the cold was bearable enough, I would say ideally this jacket would be suitable for temps



down to 3-5 degrees and up to 33-35 degrees in the hotter months – an all-round jacket as intended.

I'm not overly a fan of having the full cover closure around the neck like most jackets have and this is where the EXO 2 is perfect (for me). It has an open neck and a snap closure just down from that, which is much more comfortable for what I like and the neck itself is a soft neoprene – again, very comfortable.

You get two waterproof outside pockets and a smartphone sized pocket on the inside of the thermal liner. Inside the jacket itself is a larger pocket that will take phone, wallet and keys.

The jacket comes in black or black/white and a wide range of sizes from XS to (wait for it) 8XL! I took a size 4XL for my 195cm giraffe-likeness. See your local bike dealer or visit [www.dririder.com.au](http://www.dririder.com.au), this is a true all year round jacket that's comfy to wear. SW

## THE ONE!

### **Segura Retro 70 jacket**

**Price - \$649.95**

I had been after just the right retro leather jacket for a couple of years and I finally found the one! It is from a well-known brand overseas, but one that is only just becoming known in Australia – Segura.

Ficeda Accessories is the distributor of Segura (a French company) products in Australia and after getting up close and feeling and seeing the quality of the new Segura range at their recent Australian launch I knew I had to have one.

The one I chose is Segura's Retro 70 leather jacket. It is made from buffalo leather and combined with the armour in the shoulders and elbows the entire jacket is CE approved, not just the armour as with so many other items on the market. The leather is remarkably soft and supple – one of the main attractions for me. This particular jacket is the one that will grow to be "my own"; the retro aspect is that the leather has a special treatment to that vintage look. As it ages the leather will get its own unique look and of course the leather will get softer and softer, the more I wear it. And wear it I have already! I don't think I've stopped wearing it, even

at home! Alana says I look very suave, but of course she's going to say that!

The Retro jacket comes with a zip-out thermal winter liner, fixed mesh lining, height adjustable elbow protectors and five outside and three inside pockets.

You can get the Retro in a variety of colours. From a "standard" black with white stripes, to my black with yellow stripes, an awesome looking dark brown with orange stripes, to red, tan or blue leather with white stripes. The Retro is available in sizes S-4XL. I'm 195cm tall and take a 3XL.

Not only can this be used as a motorcycle jacket, but along with most of the Segura range this particular jacket is fashionable enough to wear off

the bike and can be worn just as that – a fashion piece and I'll be using the Retro for both functions. See your local bike dealer, or visit [www.ficeda.com.au](http://www.ficeda.com.au) to get your piece of luxury today! SW ●









# BALKANS RIDE

WHAT DID I USE, AND HOW DID IT PERFORM?

WORDS/PHOTOS THE BEAR

I have seen many things in this life, but few have been more sad-yet-hilarious than a road tester, out on a long ride, who discovers that the brand-new gear he is testing... doesn't work. It has been somewhat less hilarious when I am the person around whom a supposed top-of-the-line riding suit disintegrates, of course. Or when the "waterproof" boots fill with rain and the gloves stain my hands with an evil and probably carcinogenic blue-black dye... and yes, all of that has happened.

So these days when I go on a longer trip like the recent two week run through the Balkans, I pack a mixture of proven old and promising new gear. I've been there, done that with dud gear so that's my prerogative, I reckon. As it happens, nothing I've mentioned below was absolutely new – so don't be surprised if you find that I was happy with it all! Well, almost.

Oh, I have not included prices, because I've had a lot of this stuff for a long time and prices vary. So if you're interested in pursuing any of it, talk to a dealer.

*The Bear on the mainland highway with the island of Pag in the background. (Photo Primož Bric)*





### NOLAN N44 HELMET

After finding that the chin piece of the previous helmet in this series pressed on my chin at speed, I was pleased with the extra space in the N44. No more chin pressure. It also offers outstanding vision with its wide cutout and large visor. And the people you encounter can see you smiling! The visor is Pinlock-ready, but ventilation was good enough so I don't think I'd need it. The helmet is not as quiet as it could be, but that varies with bikes; it is very light and I found it comfortable at all speeds. The helmet is also convertible to any one of 5 variations; I was happy with the full face/visor configuration.

### BMW COMFORT SHELL SUIT

Superseded by the "Tourshell" some years ago, this suit is one of the oldest I still have hanging in the garage. The reason is

simple – it is near as damn perfect. Good both in hot and cold weather, as well as wet and dry, the Comfort Shell is well named. It's pleasant to not have to put on a rain suit when the heavens open. I just wore jocks and a T-shirt under it and found it coped with temperatures from 35 down to 6. Any lower than that and you would want to add long underwear. The suit has survived extremely well, and looks almost new. To keep it that way I just take the EC protectors out and put it in the washing machine.

### TRIUMPH SHORT GLOVES

Well and truly worn, and in fact due for replacement, these gloves with their carbon fibre (?) knuckle protectors did a terrific job once again. I hardly know I'm wearing them, but they definitely



provide some kind of subconscious reassurance of safety. They are summer gloves, but will do in somewhat cooler weather. I can't remember the name but Triumph no longer offers these anyway. I suspect you will be able to find something similar in their range.

### IXON PRO SHELL GLOVES

Looking somewhat gentlemanly in cool black, these gloves also have hard knuckle guards, but they are concealed under the fabric. The gloves fit over or under jacket sleeves, so they're almost gauntlets. They are not waterproof, but it takes a long time for rain to penetrate. When



it does, though, watch out – all of a sudden, they're sodden! A good choice in light or intermittent rain, and temperatures from warm to cold.

### DRAGGIN HOLESHOT JEANS

I wear these jeans quite often on my way to work. Their safety features, which include abrasion resistance for 7.45 seconds and CE hip and knee armour, make them a good choice at any time, although they do look a

bit bulky. You have some choice where to place the armour, so you should be able to get its location just right for yourself. On this trip I took them as backup for the Comfort Shell suit. As it turned out I only wore them for one day's ride, but they proved to be as comfortable as they are at home. I like the straps that run under your boots or feet (your choice) to stop them from riding up.



### AEROSTICH COMBAT LITE BOOTS

Andy Goldfine from Aerostich cautioned me that the boots would take some breaking in, but he was wrong. They







fitted nearly perfectly and were snug right from the first wear. Their combination of a clasp and laces – which are tightened easily with a slider; you don't have to tie a bow – is ideal and makes it easy to don or doff them. I hadn't hit them with quite enough Dubbin to make them waterproof, so they did leak a bit. Not in the rain, though; it took a ride through Croatia's lake-like road puddles to penetrate them.

## RJAYS THERMAL UNDERWEAR

Ever wanted to work as a body double for Catwoman? Black and skintight, these pants and top are well made and effective. Not that I'd know from this trip – I took the thermals just in case it got really cold, but the temperature only dropped for a short while and I didn't need to wear them. So, what can I say? Well, I've used them on other trips and they've been excellent, wicking moisture away from my body and keeping me warm. So take my word for it: thermals, and particularly these, are a good investment.

## ALPINE EAR PLUGS

I have several sets of ear plugs, which is kind of ironic because I was stupid enough to ride without plugs when I was younger. As a result my hearing has suffered substantially, and I am now sorry – but it's too late. I took these Alpine plugs on the trip because I hadn't worn them on a long ride, and I was pleased that I did – they stayed comfortable for longer than some other plugs.

The neat little container that holds the plugs gives you a choice of two levels of muffling, just by changing end caps. I used the higher level and found it good. I could still hear what I needed to, but a



lot of noise, especially in the higher registers, was reduced.

## MOTORCYCLIST MAGAZINE NECK TUBE

Well, what can I say? Incredibly useful, comfortable, warm when dry, cool if



soaked in water, stylish (orange is the new black)... but then, it is our very own. Seriously, it was good to have.

## BMW F 700 GS

It might seem odd to review a bike like this, but I'd just like to say that the 700 is now my bike of choice among rental bikes. It is light and handy and



extremely low stress to ride, and still has enough power. Equipped with a top box and a tank bag it will also carry everything I need without any hassles in getting at it. Why not an 800? I don't need the extra suspension travel and power, and in fact am happy with the lower centre of gravity. The bike is easy to control with one hand when I use the other one for my camera.

## ADRIATIC MOTO TOURS

The organisers of this tour deserve another mention. They not only offer top-notch service, with pickup from the airport, high quality hotels and near-new bikes, they also employ top-notch guides and van drivers – at least if our pair were anything to go by. Dušan and Primož did a terrific job, and nothing threw them off; not even the need to get a hotel to open early, before its season started, so we had somewhere to stay when the weather trapped us on Pag island. Nothing was too much trouble. Thanks, blokes.

Yes, I did the tour at Adriatic's invitation, at no cost – but I would have given them big ups even if I'd paid for it. ●



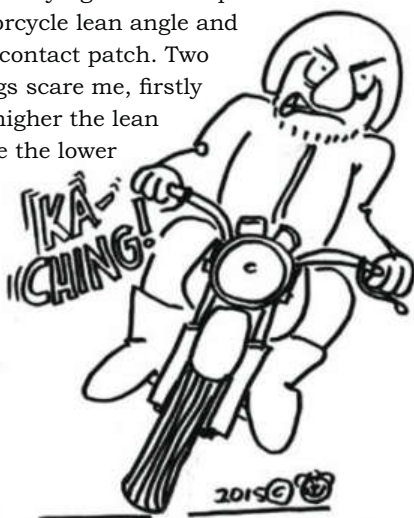


# MINISTER OF TRANSPORT

## PRESS RELEASE KEITH BOSLER

Road safety is extremely important to us here at the Ministry and we will spare no expense being paid to us to ensure our statistics reflect that. It is one of my Key Performance Indicators after all, the amount of revenue raised.

It has thus come to my attention the terrifying relationship between motorcycle lean angle and tyre contact patch. Two things scare me, firstly the higher the lean angle the lower



the contact patch the higher the likelihood of an accident. Secondly, until now there was no way to enforce it. By 'enforce' I mean 'levy'.

So, we have come up with a brilliant thing, a smart phone app for all riders which we have called the Frequent Inclination Naughty Expense app, or FINE app. This app will measure a motorcycle's lean angle and at any stage it exceeds a safe angle, currently determined to be 16 degrees, a FINE warning will occur, triggering an amount payable to the Ministry.

The same FINE will apply when the app senses an unsatisfactory forward or rearward tilt, so things like wheelies and stoppies will also trigger a tax.

Don't worry, the FINE will not be payable for first time offenders. Oops, sorry that should read 'will be payable'. My mistake but it's for your own good really, I'm just trying to keep you safer.

Besides, with the extra money we raise we'll be able to instigate new safety measures, like recommended lean angle signs on corners (all being less than 16 degrees).

Now during the consultancy process (aka I asked my chauffeur driver what he thought) it was suggested to me that the only way a motorcycle could turn some corners at lower than 16 degrees was to drive inordinately slowly. I have a new chauffeur now, thanks for asking.

He had a point though, we can't have motorcyclists slowing the rest of us down, just because they are trying to be safe or worse - trying avoid a fine. So, we'll be putting minimum speeds limits on corners as well and yes, the app will be able to track those too. We think of everything.

So please enjoy our new FINE app, its mandatory after all. I know I will. ●

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# THE THREE Fs

FUEL, FOOD AND... FEATHER BEDS? COMPILED BY THE BEAR



Get your feet up, Gumby! The Bear on a Beach's tour at Lake Garda, Italy. (Photo Gretchen Beach)





*He hasn't seen the sign yet... (Photo Gretchen Beach)*

As I write this, Australia is just getting used to a new Prime Minister. Will anything change because there's a new face at the despatch box? Well, maybe. Despite a couple of years of studying economics at university, I've never been able to get my head around all the reasons for currency revaluation. I mean, a lower currency is good, right? Then again it's bad. I can actually follow

that. Exports earn more, imports cost more. But why a currency drops or rises in value – that seems to depend on which side of the bed international currency traders got out of that morning.

What I do know is that a lower currency is bad for us travelling motorcyclists. Not just if we're going overseas, but also locally because it always seems to result in increased

prices here in Australia. Presumably the reason is that everyone feels overseas visitors will pay more because the exchange rate has been so favorable. Fine for them, but not for us. The only thing we exchange is our labour for the same number of dollars.

But the lower dollar is not in fact as bad as it might look on the evening news. As I write this, once again, one Aussie dollar gets you 71 cents American or 63 Euro cents. Given how cheap a lot of things are in the US and in many countries in Europe, that will still buy you a lot of fuel, food or.. er.. feather beds. Air fares, in the meantime, are remarkably low. Qantas is offering return fares to Santiago, Chile from about A\$1300. So don't write off overseas - or local, for that matter - travel.

There's a whole world out there to see and, more importantly, to experience on a bike. The key consideration, to my mind, is always: if not now, when? PT



## BEYOND THE BALKANS

You may have read my story about exploring the Balkans with Adriatic Moto Tours, recently. Martina and Matej launched Adriatic Moto Tours—the region's first motorcycle touring company - in 2004, confident that serious motorcyclists the world over would share their love of riding some of the most beautiful, least discovered roads in Eastern and Central Europe. At first, it

was just two BMWs, an F650GS and an R1200GS, and two countries, Slovenia and Croatia.

Now, a dozen years later, AMT has expanded to a fleet of ninety expertly maintained new or 1-2 year old touring motorcycles from BMW, Ducati, Triumph, Yamaha and others, and added 22 countries to their itineraries, including a part of Europe often overlooked by Western travelers: the Balkans.

AMT is based in Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia - a great gateway to start and

end diverse tours from the Alps to the Black Sea. Led by knowledgeable guides, there are several tour options, starting with their best seller, the Beautiful Balkans Adventure: Romania to Istanbul Adventure, Tuscany- Sardinia - Corsica Tour, Alps Deluxe & French Riviera, Greece Tour, Czech Hungary Tour, Top of the Alps, and many others.

This year, AMT debuted an Italia Espresso tour and sLOVEnia tour. The first one could have as easily been named "La Vita e Bella on two wheels,"





## ON THE BEACH'S IN 2016

Ava Gardner did not in fact say during shooting for *On the Beach* that Melbourne was the perfect place to

make a film about the end of the world. She may, on the other hand, have said that she had been in Auckland but couldn't say anything about it because it had been closed... we are not sure. She did say

*Dinner venue in Corsica, Beach's tour.*

"Deep down, I'm pretty superficial," for what that's worth.  
(...continued over page)



as the ride takes you from the East to the West coasts of the Apennine peninsula, revealing romantic Tuscany. The second tour will introduce the hidden gem between the Alps and the Adriatic Sea, a two million population country of Slovenia, considered a bikers' heaven. Tours are mostly 9 to 15 days long.

"In 2016 we are looking further east towards Turkey," says Martina. "We are also planning on adding some longer tours, up to 18 days. One is discovering old and always beautiful European

capitals – Prague, Budapest, Vienna, Krakow, Salzburg and so on. The other one stays in the Balkans with the addition of more days at the Adriatic Coast.

"In addition to these professionally guided, full service tours, complete with chase/luggage vans and no detail left unaddressed, clients may choose simply to rent a bike and go it alone, or, somewhere in the middle, to draw upon AMT's vast experience in the form of written instructions, maps, and pre

*From left - Roads along the Adriatic coast have improved vastly, Europe's landscape is not necessarily crowded. The Durmitor Range looks barren but is beautiful, Mostar's unity bridge, a symbol of hope, High above Kotor, about to tackle the road down.*



-arranged lodgings, in addition to the motorcycle rental."

For more information see [www.adriaticmototours.com](http://www.adriaticmototours.com) or get in touch with Martina at [info@adriaticmototours.com](mailto:info@adriaticmototours.com).



What we are sure about is that Beach's Motorcycle Adventures run wonderful tours; I've experienced one of them and still dine out on some of the stories. Here's their 2016 season at a glance:

**Maori Meander, New Zealand** 3 Weeks, North & South Island.

March 14 - April 3

**South Island Scamper, New Zealand** 2 Weeks, South Island.

March 21 - April 3

**South African Saunter, Garden**

**Route.** April 10 - 24 &

November 6 - 20

**Island Interlude, Corsica & Sardinia.**

May 1 - 15

**Adriatic Amble, Slovenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia.** May 22 - June 5

**Classic Alpine Adventure, Central**



## CUBA LIBRE

Next February I'm going to Cuba. Edelweiss Bike Travel kindly invited me to take part in their Classic Cuba tour from the 24th of February to the 5th of March, and I have to tell you I grabbed the opportunity with both hands. I have been thinking about visiting Cuba for longer than I can remember; mind you, that's only since last Thursday week...

Where was I? I'm going to be riding a Harley around the island of 'Papa' Hemingway, 'Che' Guevara and Fidel Castro. Can't wait. More info as it arrives; meanwhile, you can find out all about Edelweiss at [www.edelweissbike.com](http://www.edelweissbike.com), or you can ring them on +43.5264.5690; they're based in Austria.

I found this comment from Vivien and Paul Newrick from the UK about a previous Classic Cuba tour on their website:

'This Cuba tour must be one of the best Edelweiss tours. Excellent riding, varied scenery, history, culture, vibrant colour and vintage cars just everywhere. We even swam in the ocean [?]. The highlight for us was to visit Havana with all its wonderful old buildings and bright 1950's cars. That ride along the Malecon is unique. We also enjoyed riding through the old colonial towns full of colour and character, the roads lined with revolutionary slogans and images of Che Guevara... Cuba is a unique destination - thank you Manuel (our tour guide) for your excellent guiding!'

I know Manuel and I agree that he's an excellent guide, except when it comes to finding his way out of parking garages... just my little joke, Mannie!



*Manuel's not just a good guide, he cooks a mean hot dog too!*



**European Alps.** June 12 - 26, July 3  
- 17 & July 24 - August 7

**Alpine Sampler, 1 Week Central**

**European Alps.** June 19 - 26, July 10  
- 17 & July 31 - August 7

**Alpine Adventure West, Western**

**European Alps** (New Itinerary).

August 21 - September 4

**Transylvania Trek, Slovakia,  
Hungary, Romania** (New Itinerary).

September 11 - 25

**Italian Idyll, Tuscany & More!**

October 2 - 16.

It sounds as if Rob and Gretchen

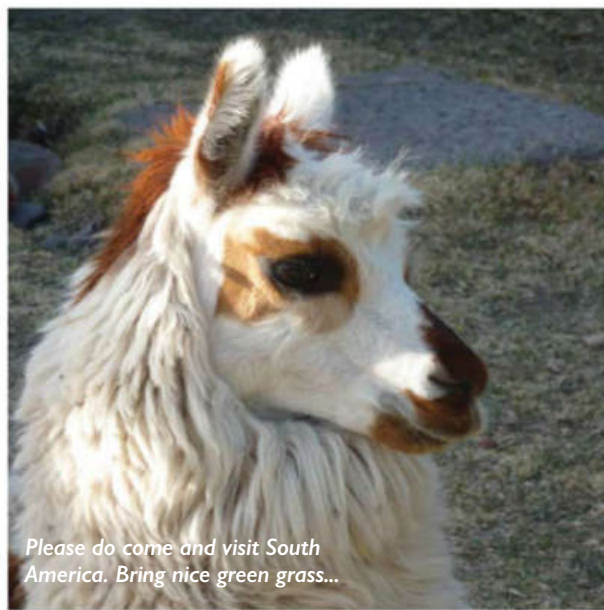
will be having a big year!  
Get in touch with them at

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[www.bmca.com](http://www.bmca.com),  
[tours@bmca.com](mailto:tours@bmca.com), 14072-2053.

## COLOMBIAN MARCHING ORDERS

While we're on the subject of my various travels, please note that Motolombia, the Colombian-based tour operator, has invited me to share one of their tours as well. They have a good range of tours and bikes, and the bikes are available as rentals as well.

My neighbours' son married a Colombian girl earlier this year, and the neighbours came back absolutely raving about the country. The Colombians, it seems, know how to party – and the country is staggeringly beautiful. Not that I needed their assurances, but they've made me all the more keen to explore the place. So keep an eye out for my story – and in the meantime check out Motolombia at [www.MOTOLOMBIA.com](http://www.MOTOLOMBIA.com) or ring +57 (2) 392 91 72 if you're in a hurry for more information. ●



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# HIT THE RED DUST

## SOUTH WEST CORNER

This month we hit the rich red dirt again, this time in the south west corner of Queensland, basing ourselves at Cameron Corner. This particular loop takes in some sights of the famous explorers Burke and Wills. Just make sure that you don't do what they did on their fateful journey! You'll encounter mainly well maintained dirt roads and the occasional stretch of sand.

### CAMERON CORNER

Make this your base camp. Take your tent and sleeping bag or there is an option of family, double and single air-conditioned rooms. These are detached from the store and have share bathrooms. All bedding is supplied. Meals are available at the store. There are also powered and un-powered campsites, and a camp kitchen for self-catering.

Cameron Corner is one of the most remote locations in the Outback and one of the busiest. Each year several thousand people pass this way. Today Cheryl and Fenn Miller (formerly of Port Douglas) call Cameron Corner home. Ask Cheryl why she lives where she does and she'll probably say that she "loves the remoteness, quietness and the desert, the people you meet, and the locals". The Cameron Corner Store is open seven days a week for meals, fuel, and minor vehicle repairs. Contact the store on 08 8091 3872 or email [camcorner@activ8.net.au](mailto:camcorner@activ8.net.au)

### OMICRON

Basically a landmark only. Omicron is part of a cattle station.

### EPSILON

Epsilon is a working organic cattle property set amongst the sand masses of the Simpson Strzelecki Sand Dunes and within reach of the country first explored by Charles Sturt. This family owned station provides accommodation at the homestead, in cabins or campsites. The Station provides comfortable bed and breakfast accommodation with all modern facilities available. Features include family station activities, wildlife, and wildflowers in season. Contact Sharon Betts on Ph: 07 4655 4324 or via email: [epsilon5@bigpond.com](mailto:epsilon5@bigpond.com)

### DELLA SATELLITE GAS STATION

Another landmark, you won't get any "gas" there, as this is part of the feed for the huge gas pipeline from Moomba. Have a look around, but keep on ridin'!

### INNAMINCKA

Innamincka is a fascinating Outback destination with a permanent population of about twelve. The Innamincka Trading Post provides a comprehensive range of supplies and services for visitors to the area. It offers excellent meals, accommodation, auto services (including fuel!) and accessories, permits and general store services. Ph: 08 8675 9900 or email: [innamincka@innaminckatp.com.au](mailto:innamincka@innaminckatp.com.au)

### BURKE & WILLS DIG TREE

There are four sites with memorials commemorating the expedition: The Dig Tree is one of them. It is the site of Camp 65, also known as Fort Wills. This was the second depot camp established

on the Cooper. Burke arrived here on 6 December 1860 and left for the Gulf on 16 December 1860. William Brahe was left in charge of the depot with instructions (variously recalled) to wait for three months, or four months, or as long as his provisions would last. Brahe waited for four months and one week before marking the date, camp number and dig message on a tree, and on Sunday, 21 April 1861, he left to return to Menindee. Burke, Wills and King returned to the Dig Tree that evening to find the camp deserted.

The blaze showing B-LXV (Burke, Camp 65) is still visible as it has been kept open by cutting back the overgrowing bark. The other blazes, the Dig blaze and the Date blaze have overgrown and are no longer visible. Just 30 metres from the Dig Tree, is the Face Tree. It has a carving of Burke's face with the (overgrown) initials R O'H B.

### NAPPA MERRIE

A handful of kilometres from the Dig Tree, Nappa Merrie is another outback working cattle station and is your landmark to turn south.

### ORIENTOS

Yet another working cattle station and another landmark for your venture back to Cameron Corner.

### SANTOS

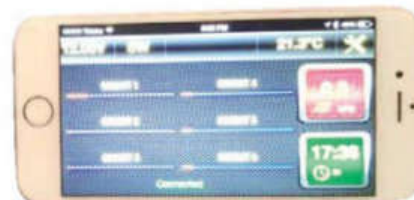
Santos is 30km or so from Orientos and depending on how you're travelling you can continue to Cameron Corner, or turn right and stay at Epsilon, which is only another 30 or so kilometres. ●



# NEUTRINO BLACK BOX

THE POWER TO BE FREE!

WORDS/PHOTOS JOHN CONNOR



The Black Box Neutrino from Arboreal Systems (SMART Accessories in Australia) is a power distribution and controller device. It is a great way to hook up all the add-on 12 volt devices and gadgets on your bike. It can also be used in cars, boats, caravans and anything that uses 12 volt devices. The Neutrino unit is packed full of features that make this the unit to buy. The best feature is that the setup and status of the unit are all managed via a smartphone. This feature not only makes it really simple and quick to setup and use; it also reduces the amount of wiring and number of devices you need to attach to your bike.

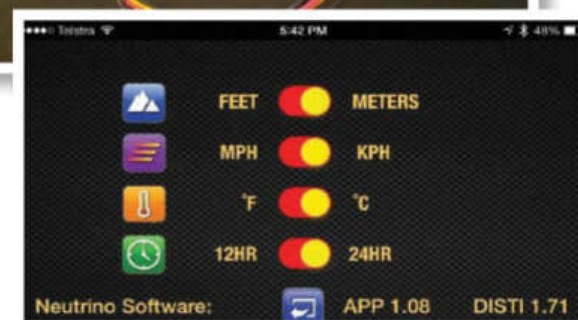
The unit itself is small so you can find plenty of places to mount it on a motorbike. There is some cabling to do, but the instructions that come with the device make it dead easy to hook up and the cabling is minimal. If you're not confident in wiring things up, see an auto electrician.

You need a smartphone to get this working. Any iPhone or Android based phone works as long as it has Bluetooth 4.0 support. The application is free from the Apple Store or Google Playstore and called the Neutrino Cockpit Controller. Once you have the application on the phone and the unit is wired in and the ignition on, you will be able to directly connect the app to the Neutrino. There are no fiddly passwords or messing about

with pairing devices. Simply go into the app and click on connect. The unit can be programmed once and set forever. So if you don't have your own smartphone you can borrow one and set it up the way you like. However there is lots of cool status information you can retrieve from the device that makes this better than just a power distribution unit. You will want your own phone to get the full benefits.

The real beauty of the device is you can hook up 6 different devices without stacking up lots of cables on your battery terminals and having to mount on/off switches for every device. UHF radio, heated grips, heated seat, USB Ports, heated suit, jacket and gloves connectors etc. All of it can be controlled by your phone and there is no need to have a separate fuse for all your devices because the 6 output ports all have self-resetting circuit breakers. The phone app will indicate which of the 6 circuits has tripped. This makes troubleshooting a breeze and saves replacing fuses while solving the problem.

The unit has some other cool stuff that I don't consider part of power distribution but more like added extras. It can tell you the ambient temperature around the



bike, it can tell your altitude above sea level, it can even tell your speed and set things to power up or down based on a time or time limit. I realise your mobile phone can tell you some of this stuff without having the Neutrino but it could be useful especially if your mobile is not in range of a mobile network.

The unit is firmware upgradeable via the app so if the manufacturer comes up with a fix or new features it is quick and easy to upgrade the unit. It is reasonably priced at \$395 delivered and available from [www.smartmotorcycleaccessories.com.au](http://www.smartmotorcycleaccessories.com.au). You will also find great tutorials, instructions and detailed specifications on the device on the website. ●

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# Australian MOTORCYCLIST Magazine

## BACK ISSUES



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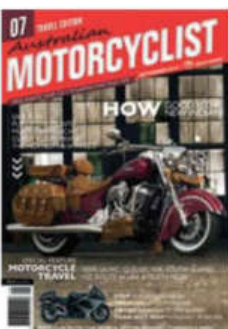
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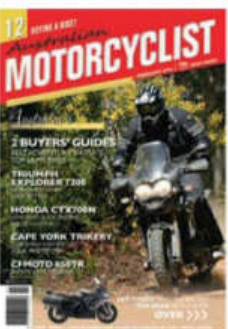
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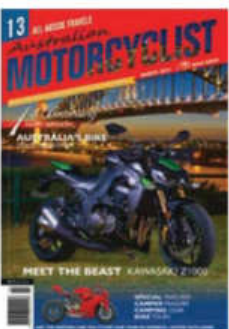
**#10 December 2013** Tear-out map: Mudgee, NSW / Special summer reading issue / We ride the Indians / Honda CB500X / BMW K 1600 GT two up / Yamaha Super Tenere / Victory Highball / Suzuki Burgman / Piaggio Yourban / A Duke in Scotland / Grey Nomads around Australia / Himalaya / Triumph Tiger Cub – Triumph Tiger what?!



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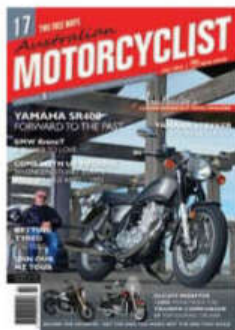


**#15 May 2014** Tear-out map: Central Tasmania / Toughest test: two CFmoto 650s across Oz and back in six days / Big winter clothing survey / BMW R 1200 GS Adventure – with water / Aprilia Tuono ABS / Ducati 899 Panigale / Touring BMW C 650 GT / Chicks get their kicks on Route 66 / Lithgow dirt / Hearing protection





#16 June 2014 Two tear-out maps! Road: SE Vic & NSW, Adventure: Flinders Ranges / Top touring with BMW R 1200 RT / H-D Road King Classic / Spring is near – get ready / Katana memories / Touring all over Australia / H-D Fat Bob / The latest on Erik Buell / We launch MOTORCYCLIST tours / Choppers Australia / Ulysses shock



#17 July 2014 Tear-out maps: Road, Northern New England & Adventure, the Gibb River Road / Tyre Special / BMW RnineT / Ducati Monster 1200S / Triumph Commander LT / Yamaha Stryker & SR400 / Travel: Cairns, Bellingen, Alice Springs / New Buells and Benellis / We want a Yike Bike / Get the bike you want, not the one they build / Where can a postie bike take you?



#18 August 2014 Helmet Special / Tear-out maps: Adventure, Duck Creek Rd & Road, northern NSW / Electric Harley / Aprilia Caponord v Kawasaki Ninja 1000 / BMW S 1000 R / Ducati SF848 / Indian Vintage on tour / Kawasaki KLR 650 / Triumph Commander / Honda CBR 650F / Travel: Bombala, Oodnadatta Track, Riddoch Highway SA, Looking for the first oil well in California



#19 September 2014 Vale John Galvin / Indian Scout revealed / Lane filtering how to / Tear-out maps: Road, Outback NSW & Adventure the Watagans / Honda CTX1300 / Yamaha MT-09 / Kawasaki KLX150L / Honda VFR800F / Upgraded Ural outfits / Raider Motorcycles build your bike / Travel: NSW, New Zealand, California, Loaded Dog & Casper rallies / Twin Yamaha Bolts



#20 October 2014 Special feature Summer Riding: NZ, NSW, Vic / Boris joins us / KTM 1290 Superduke R / Suzuki V-Strom 1000 in the dirt / Ducati Multistrada Pikes Peak / Tear-out maps NZ and Tasmania / Melbourne's Gasolina / Glenn McGrath on his bike / Wintersun Rally



#21 November 2014 Summer Gear Guide / BMW K 1600 GTL / Yamaha MT-07 / KTM RC390 Launch / BMW RnineT / Zero SR electric / Tear-out maps Far North Qld & snowy Vic / Visiting the Centre / Rollies for accessories / What do we wear? / Which bike?



#22 December 2014 Christmas gift guide / 2015 bikes from Cologne / Victory Gunner / Ducati Monster 821 / Can-Am Spyder RT Limited SE6 / Kawasaki Vulcan 900 Classic / Tear-out maps FNQ Part 2 & around Bombala / Vietnam for 9 / Crossing borders can be fun / Bear Army



#23 January 2015 Rest of the 2015 bikes, from Milan / Indian Scout launch / Yamaha TriCity / CF Moto 650NK / Are sports bikes back? / Tear-out maps Putty Road & the Cape / Our Bombala Show / Melbourne-Adelaide the back way / The Bear travels with Edelweiss



#24 February 2015 Launch, Ducati Scrambler / Four new LAMS bikes: Triumph Street Triple, Enfield Café Racer, Kawa Vulcan S, Mercury / Travel to the Alps, Tibet, New Zealand, Malaysia – and Australia! / Shinko tyre test / Tear-out maps: Coober Pedy & Bingara / Pimp your Beemer / Where to meet your mates all over Oz



#25 March 2015 Tests Kawasaki Versys 1000 & H-D Street 500 / A girl's tour of Oz / Visiting Brembo / Tear-out maps: following the Darling & back roads of Omeo / All about organised motorcycle tours / travel around Sydney and the SA Limestone Coast / Boris at Bombala / Zero supplies police bikes / Pub tales from all over



#26 April 2015 Special features: all about commuting & camping roundup / 17 bikes to ride to work with pride / Launch Yamaha R1, R1M / Our South Island NZ tour, part 1 / Launch Yamaha MT-09 Tracer / Tear-out maps: Nowra to Cooma & way out WA / BMW's beginner bike revealed / Pirelli tyre test / Adelaide's Old Road



#27 May 2015 Huge Winter Guide: 44 ways for you to stay warm / Six LAMS bikes from Kawasaki / Launch BMW S 1000 RR, R 1200 R, F 800 R / Inspect a Gadget / Horizons Unlimited get-together / Suzuki Burgman 200 / Tear-out maps: more around Omeo & Fraser Island / Adventure Film Festival / Melbourne-Sydney on a V-Strom 650 XT

And of course every issue has wise words, Lester Morris, top touring & travel information, our Pub of the Month, the Bear's humour, technical advice, our comprehensive price list and lots and lots of travel suggestions. And don't forget accessory and gear news and reviews and the low-down on all the stuff we fit and do to our collection of long-term loan bikes!

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# OH, YE'RE LUCKY...

YOU HEAR ME? LUCKY, I SAY (MUMBLE MUMBLE...) **WORDS** LESTER MORRIS

**M**odern day motorcyclists are certainly spoiled for choice; spoiled for choice, I say!

Everywhere you look there are streamlined, high-performance roadster motorcycles of almost every shape and size – although many are disturbingly similar in appearance – of every conceivable colour, and all seem to be of similarly ‘urgent’ intent. They sit quietly on the showroom floor, or are parked innocently outside, but nearly all of them – including the lightweight commuters – look as though they are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to have some lucky owner smilingly straddle then, fire them up and then zoom off at speed into the sunset.

Even the plainest of them exhibit engine designs which were (or would have been) the stuff of wet dreams only a generation or two ago, for they bristle with such standard devices as double overhead camshaft engines, often multi-cylindere and usually with multi-valve cylinder-heads. They exhibit hydraulically-controlled disc brakes, alloy wheel rims and fat tyres made with special ‘rubber’ compounds, fancy tread patterns and contours which are ideally shaped for brisk cornering.

Their long-travel, hydraulically-controlled telescopic front and swing-arm rear suspension systems are now standardised, and are thus almost basic, while the handlebars controls

are lighter than ever and much more efficient. But the placement of those high-mounted, minuscule, ‘afterthought’ foot-pegs on sports models which pillion riders are forced to attempt to use safely could be a great deal better designed, I’m sure. That huge gap between rear tyres and rear guards which most modern-day motorcycles seem to feature is surely on the far side of ugly indeed. Back to the ‘bathtub’ rear wheel enclosure of Triumph twins of fifty and more years ago, I say, which, by no means popular even then, certainly imbued those mostly-forgotten motorcycles with far more pleasing, flowing lines.

So what, I hear you hoarsely cry; get on with it, you fool! So what, indeed? And so, let’s get on with it.

For a start, there is nothing new about multi-cylinder overhead camshaft motorcycle engines powering road-going motorcycles.

The 500cc OHC Square Four Ariel, with its chain-driven overhead camshaft, and the 600cc Matchless ‘Silver Hawk’ Vee-Four, its overhead camshaft driven by impressive bevel gears and vertical shaft, were four-cylinder machines coincidentally exhibited at the same Olympia Motorcycle Show, in 1930. It must be said, however, that they were rare examples, and were very much the exception rather than the rule. Oh, and the Matchless adopted a clever form of

cantilever rear suspension by swing-arm and adjustable friction damping for its horizontally-mounted springs. It was a similar system to the cantilever rear suspension seen on the single-cylinder Moto-Guzzi five-hundred in 1929, to be later adopted, with great success, by Vincent in the mid-thirties and some Yamaha machines in much, much more recent times.

Peugeot campaigned a 500cc DOHC vertical twin racer back in 1922, while the Belgian FN offered a four-cylinder, shaft drive motorcycle with a crude telescopic front as far back as 1908. Indian utilized a form of electric self-starter with its Power Plus machines around 1918, and also employed swing-arm rear suspension and leading link front forks to provide suspension at both ends just prior to World War One, the wheel travel controlled by un-damped quarter-elliptic leaf springs. A similar system of swingarm rear suspension was employed on Granville Bradshaw’s British ABC in 1922. There was some attempt at controlling spring oscillation with simple, infinitely adjustable friction damping on some of these forms of springing (Moto Guzzi provided an early example), but in other suspension systems the wheels were free to jump about all over the place.

The following year, Freddie Dixon won the 1923 Isle-of-Man Sidecar TT with his unique ‘banking sidecar’ flat-twin Douglas which was built so that the

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bike, along with the banking sidecar wheel, could be cranked over like a solo machine, with all three wheels leaning into a corner. His racing sidecar was fitted with three unique, cable-operated disc brakes, which proved to be very powerful and owed their design to the aircraft disc brakes which were to be seen on the occasional flying machine in those days. Unaccountably, his simple disc brake design never caught on with any manufacturer over 90 – that's ninety – years ago even after his most impressive win. And there were hundreds of motorcycle factories in the world in those days. This will forever remain a mystery; at least it will to me!

Four-valve cylinder heads were commonly used in aircraft as far back as prior to the 1914-18 war, and were used by Harley-Davidson and Indian board-track racers – among other American machines – while many British motorcycle factories adopted this design in later years as well, including Rudge, Royal Enfield, Excelsior and Triumph, so again there is nothing new about that.

There is also nothing new about the design of the diamond-and-headstock frame, which first appeared when the safety cycle was invented in the latter part of the nineteenth century. This antiquated design is still used to this day in the construction of every popular motorcycle on the planet. It could thus be argued that, while motorcycle design has advanced very steadily over many years and has now achieved a very high level of sophistication, in some critical areas it has managed to stand absolutely still at the same time!!

But the greatest area in which modern motorcyclists may happily rejoice is in the design of a bewildering range of first-class protective clothing for, as we often see within the pages of this rightly-revered publication, there seems to be no end to the great, ever-expanding range of these essential items from which to choose.

There are now armor plated gloves, comfortable, bullet-proof boots, back protectors (back protectors?), one-piece or two-piece heavy duty water-and-wind proof suits which employ built-in protective armor, and helmets which will fit a cranium of any size, no matter how small, large or oddly-shaped that person's head may be.

It was not ever thus, because when I started riding motorcycles as a schoolboy there was nothing available in the way of protective clothing (or accessories) for motorcyclists; nothing that is, except for the very effective, extremely rare and monumentally costly Barbour or Belstaff waxed cotton jackets and trousers. They were very effective indeed, were rightly referred to as 'greasies' at the time and are still to be seen on occasion worn by the more elderly of our number; including, for what this is worth, myself.

But it was within the War Surplus stores where most of the motorcyclist's gear was purchased just after War's end, with the long, single-breasted khaki Army greatcoat by far the most popular. It was worn almost as a uniform by a great many riders and did the job very well indeed, for a large Army greatcoat was made of very thick, heavy-duty wool, and could easily stop the worst of winter's chill. The thing was also surprisingly waterproof, although it would be so heavy when well saturated that once a rider removed his long coat and hung it up somewhere it was so heavy it could hardly be lifted up again!

At one time, there was very grim joke doing the rounds about that Army overcoat, and this is it:- "It appears that the rider's female pillion passenger was complaining about the wind whistling through the open gap between the single-fronted buttons, so he suggested she should wear her greatcoat back-to-front; which she did.

As it happened they slipped off at some speed on an unseen oil patch, and were naturally spat up the road for some

distance. When the rider finally sat up and looked about him, he fearfully enquired from the recently-arrived ambulance driver as to the condition of his girlfriend.

The Ambo was said to have answered that she was screaming at him very loudly when he arrived, but when he screwed her head back the right way round, she suddenly shut up!"

That large Army overcoat never appealed to me at all, but there were many other War Surplus products which did, including the strangely-designed, if entirely practical, full-length, Birkmyre-canvas, waterproof overcoats worn by British dispatch riders. They were very heavy, employing two thicknesses or Birkmyre canvas with a sheet of rubber interpolated, but even the smallest of them was so large that it dragged along the ground whenever I wore it: but I wore it everywhere for some little time, nonetheless.

One of its most clever design features was to have a large flap attached to the rear of the coat, which I could hitch up under my legs and attach to the front by four large press-studs, and this was intended to protect one's nether regions from the ingress of water which would always run down the fuel tank. There were several other press studs which were sited along the rim of the coat which, when nipped up, resulted in that all-enveloping coat wrapping itself closely around my legs as far down as to cover my boots.

It worked brilliantly, for that heavy coat fitted perfectly when I was seated upon my tiny, 125cc James commuter – which it was clearly designed to do. But when strolling around it was a shocker, because it looked laughable in the extreme, for it bulged out grossly at the back and I always looked as though I had filled my nappy hugely, and several times over at that!

So help me, when the thing was fully buttoned-up, I could never get my ankles any closer together than about half-a



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meter apart, which meant that when I walked about I looked as though I had suffered either a grim accident, a sudden attack of piles, enjoyed a delightful, fun-filled encounter which resulted in the swift onset of Shagger's Back, or had simply slipped a disc.

Across the front of the high-mounted, stiff collar was a large, triangular canvas cover, which was secured in place with the agency of two more press studs. It had to be firmly attached, otherwise it would flap gleefully about, belting me savagely across the face as I was riding. It kept the cold air and water out, to be sure, but it was perched so high that I could only just see over the top of the thing, even with my neck stretched out almost to breaking point.

Unhappily, it simply had to go, although it was the smallest size available, but I suggest it was so large that even the over-sized Stuart Woodbury would doubtless have disappeared entirely within its voluminous folds!

I once had a photo of myself proudly riding the bike while encased within that enormous coat: I long since pelted that photo away, for I looked like I was a small child enclosed within the stifling embrace of a four-man canvas tent, the machine all but invisible beneath me except for its front wheel.

For a time in the late fifties to early sixties I used a one-piece ex-RAF flying suit made of a similar canvas material, which displayed a very low crutch, which was located (on me) at about mid-thigh, but which again fitted perfectly when mounted upon the much larger machine(s) which I was riding at the time. There was a quilted, purple inner suit which was supposed to be worn

underneath the one-piece flying suit, which they laughingly referred to as a 'Teddy Bear', but I decided I would never, ever be seen wearing one of those - just in case I had to take off the outer suit somewhere while in company.

Another essential item of equipment available from Army Disposal Stores were the once-ubiquitous genuine wool-lined flying boots worn by pilots and aircrew to help overcome freezing conditions in high flying aircraft. I bought a few pairs of those ill-fitting boots which were made by simply stitching sheepskins inside-out but, even with their more solid soles, they were never long-lasting because of the relative flimsiness of their sagging outer skins. These wool-lined boots were superseded later by the large firemen's boots which suddenly sprang onto the floor of Surplus Stores as the uniforms of these heroes began to evolve. However, the much better 'flying boots' were copied in later years in their many thousands for civilian use in much stronger, more acceptable designs, and became an all-time favourite for many years with legions of motorcyclists.

My complete ensemble included elbow-length pilots' sheepskin leather gauntlets, which were wool-lined and could be augmented by the many-layered silk inner-gloves which were also specified. The gauntlets were soft and pliable, and were absolutely marvellous, but unhappily they disappeared from War Surplus Stores much too soon.

There were very, very few safety helmets to be seen in those days, and those that were on hand were confined mostly to Cromwell 'pudding basin' racing types, but with peaked, leather or vinyl-covered, commuter helmets



**Lester Morris**

from Everoak, Corker or Skulgard to be seen on occasions as they very slowly, if surely, became mainstream. Perhaps the worst of those very ordinary helmets, which I confess to owning for a short period at one time, was the grim, ill-fitting, aluminium-shelled French Romer.

Whatever head gear was pressed into service, however, had to be augmented either by the ex-Air Force, safety glass Mk. 8 goggles, with their angled lenses, or the large Polaroid one-piece goggles which came in a neat pack with several sets of spare lenses, including a couple of plain ones, two shades of green, an amber lens and one which was decidedly on the red side. These Polaroid goggles were so good that many of them are still being used to this day by Allied forces in desert warfare.

Ah, yes, motorcyclists are spoilt for choice these days, spoilt for choice, let there be no doubt about it. And why not, I say, for it is only as it should be. ●

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### WHO CAN HAZ BAGZ?

Who's bagged this month's wonderful Andy Strapz Shoulda Bagz? Why it's Stan, who has not only made an effort to find

just the right motel, but has also filled in the Bear's ignorance about Dubbo. Stan certainly deserves the excellent Bagz, which we use ourselves (not the same one) and find almost endlessly useful. During the upcoming summer we look forward to filling one with tinnies and ice and thus providing ourselves with cold beverages on not-too-long bush rides. Ah yes, that Andy haz it worked out.

#### DUBBO'S THE PLACE

Hi Bear  
I found this accommodation: Centrepoin Motel, 146 Bourke St, Dubbo. 02 6882 7644 [www.centrepoinmotel.com.au](http://www.centrepoinmotel.com.au).

This motel is located just off the Mitchell Highway and is rated at 4 stars on Trip Advisor.

It's very quiet, clean, within walking distance of many eateries, has a small pool, is family run and...

It's MOTORBIKE FRIENDLY!

The staff is amiable, helpful and professional. May I recommend this motel to our fellow travellers.

Regards

**Stan**

*Stan asked if I knew a motorcycle-friendly motel in Dubbo and I had to admit I didn't, specifically. So he found this one himself. Good on you, Stan! – The Bear*

#### JEFF'S GOT IT RIGHT

Bear,  
The text accompanying the adventure tear-out map in AM 31 (p98) has some errors, and being a bit of a pedant, I would like to point them out.

1. Mount Connor is just that. Not Central anything, just plain old Mount Connor, spectacular as it is. I think the author is getting confused with Central Mount Stuart. John McDouall Stuart named this mountain (= hill) approximately 212 km north of Alice Springs Central Mount Sturt after Charles Sturt as he calculated it was the

central point in mainland Australia. He was wrong. The name was later changes to 'Stuart'.

2. There are several points that have a claim to being the centre of Australia depending on the method used to calculate it;

a. the Trigonometric Centre that can be seen just off the Stuart Highway a few kilometres north of the SA/NT border at the Johnson Geodetic Station as a cairn on the top of a low ridge

b. the Gravitational Centre that is to be found at the Lambert Centre east of Kulgera, NT north of the Finke Road.

c. the 'Furthest from the coast method' gives a point that probably corresponds to the point in the article 'between Haasts Bluff and the Tanami Road'.

d. etc.

3. There are no motorcycle shops in Alice Springs representing BMW or Kawasaki. Try Desert Edge or Jetcor if you need service for these brands. Don't count on being able to get tyres for your particular bike, although off-road bikes are better served than road bikes. If you think you will need tyres enquire/order before you leave home.



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#### APSLEY ARMS HOTEL, WALCHA

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While not strictly an error, rather than annoy the Police re road conditions check the road report web site ([www.roadreport.nt.gov.au](http://www.roadreport.nt.gov.au)) or phone 1800 24 6199. For more general information including road and weather information try [www.outback-australia-travel-secrets.com/outback\\_information.html](http://www.outback-australia-travel-secrets.com/outback_information.html). The map shows that permits are required for travel on the Mereenie Loop Road. These can be obtained free or for a small fee from Glen Helen or King's Canyon Resort.

4. Some of the opening hours given seem to me to be excessively short e.g. King's Canyon Resort '6.30 to 9.30 daily'. I think this should read 6.30 am to 9.30 pm or 06:30 to 21:30.

One last thing. Just because a place calls itself a RESORT doesn't necessarily mean you will find waving palm trees (these are at Palm Valley) and nubile, bikini-clad nymphets or mankini-clad toy boys around the pool. They may occasionally frequent such places but you are more likely to find wrinkled grey nomads and families. And the RESORT may often be more correctly

called (and to my mind this is a more apt and appealing description) Homestead. You might not find a full range of fuel at some remote places and 91 unleaded is probably 'unsneiffable' Opal. It is fine unless your adventure bike happens to be 30 years old. Oh, that is two last things. Sorry.

Just because I am anal doesn't mean you shouldn't get out here and sample what Central Australia has to offer the adventure rider, especially as you are now reliably informed .

**Jeff Cole**  
**Alice Springs**

*Being a bit of a pedant myself, what can I say, Jeff, except "thank you"? This reminds me of the story about the judge who told a lawyer that he had listened to hours of stuff from him but was no wiser. The barrister replied, "No wiser perhaps, Your Honour, but surely much better informed."— The Bear*

#### WHERE IS THE (LITTLE) BEAR?

Bear,  
It has been ages since we have seen



anything of Mini Me Bear in the pages of your magazine. Where is he? Has the Ulysses Club hatched a vile plot to hide him?

**Karen C,**  
**Murwillumbah**

*This is a good question, Karen. In fact it's two good questions. Does anyone know? And can someone send me some photos of my "Mini Me"? Here are a couple of old ones to jog memories — The Bear*

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### OUTRAGED OF DURAL

Hi Bear,

I love your magazine, it is the only one I would ever keep on the shelf and keep coming back to it over the years, the rest of the magazines out there I end up throwing away. I managed to stumble across a post that Boris had put on his Facebook page and he keep rambling on how print media is dead and there is no quality motorcycle magazines anymore. I think he is way off the mark, AMM is well written and has features that no other magazine has in the country. I think you should get Boris to re-read each issue of AMM just to get this through his obviously thick skull. He writes a column for you each month, so does he put himself in the category of "no quality"?

**John**

**Dural, NSW**

*John, it doesn't matter what I think about bike magazines. It matters what you think, since you're the bloke paying for them. And since you freely admit to throwing away the magazines you buy (presumably because they're crap), you obviously aren't a very deep thinker, or you're happy to buy garbage magazines and then toss them after you've paid for them. In which case you're just pure dumb. That being so, I understand some of my Facebook posts may be over your head, which appears to be a good deal thicker and less packed with grey matter than mine.*

*Kind regards,*

*BORIS MIHAIOVIC*

### ENLIST NOW!

Hi Peter & Stuart,

If there is still room in the 1st

Company Bear Army, or even starting the 2nd Company, could you please forward a membership form....if you deem me worthy of joining such an august group of motorcyclists. My current subscription is up for renewal.

**Ken Purbrick**

**Kambah ACT**

*No problem, Ken. There is still plenty of room in the Bear Army, and of course membership comes with a two year subscription – The Bear*

### FAIR WEATHER CHRIS

Hey guys,

Enjoy your magazine and the article in issue #31 about helmets was very interesting. I had to read the bit about which helmets are legal a couple of times just to begin to get my head around it. Wow confusing. You made a comment about replacing our existing helmets every 3 years. This, I assume, depends upon frequency of use.

Personally I refuse to ride in wet weather 1/ because I don't have wet weather gear 2/ that's what my car is for and 3/ I have a theory that the more moisture in the air the more stupid some drivers become.

I also avoid riding when the wind-chill factor brings the temperature below zero. I do have thermals but they do not allow for WC factor and I do have heated hand grips. I just like to be comfortable and enjoy my ride I do not like being distracted about how bloody cold and miserable I am. I like to remain focussed and happy. To this end as you would have gathered I'm a fair weather rider so for me I would expect to replace my helmet a lot later than 3 years.

You also mentioned solvents on the helmet do you have any suggestions on what to use to clean the helmet? Personally I use Windex on a soft cloth. Chris Weller

*Hi, Chris, and thank you for raising an important point. Helmets unfortunately age whether you're wearing them or not. Some time ago I pulled out what I thought was a fairly old but not ancient helmet. I hadn't worn it for a while, and when I put it on a weird black dust cascaded over my head. It was the comfort liner of the helmet, disintegrating.*

*The three year rule is a rule of thumb. Some helmets resist aging better than others, some develop symptoms of aging earlier. The simple way of dealing with this is to stick to the rule; a more complex way is to take a look at the helmet at regular intervals and decide for yourself whether it has aged enough to need replacing. The trouble is that you can't necessarily tell; it's rare that warnings like my black dust happen. To clean your helmet, soak a small towel in water and place over the helmet. Within a few minutes all the bugs will wipe off – The Bear*

### CHRIS AGAIN

Bear,

I understand what you mean about the black stuff. I think it also relates to quality of the foam as to how fast it dries and becomes brittle enough to dust. I have a Shark Visor R, the luminescent one, love it but interesting to see if the luminescent surface degrades quicker or slower. Obviously I hope it's slower. Thanks for writing back too. Have a blessed day and keep safe.

**Chris ●**



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New motorcycle prices go up, they go down. It can be hard to keep track of all the changes. Australian Motorcyclist Magazine supplies you with all the latest up to date prices

from all the manufacturers currently in the country. Things like special deals, cashbacks, factory discounts and bonuses are what you'll find. Bear in mind

all prices (unless indicated) exclude dealer and on road costs and some prices may have changed at the last minute as we went to the printer.

## APRILIA

[www.aprilia.com.au](http://www.aprilia.com.au)

### ROAD

RS4 125	\$5100
RS4 125 SBK	\$6250
Shiver Sport 750 ABS	\$12,990
Dorsoduro 750 ABS	\$11,990
Dorsoduro Factory ABS	\$15,690
Mana 850 Automatic	\$15,990
Tuono V4 1100 RR	\$23,000
Tuono V4 1100 Factory	\$25,000
RSV4 RR	\$25,000
RSV4 RR Race Pack	\$31,000
RSV4 RF LE	\$31,000
Dorsoduro 1200 ABS	\$13,990

### ADV SPORT

Caponord 1200 ABS	\$21,490
Caponord 1200 Rally	\$24,000

### SCOOTERS

Sportcity One 125	\$2990
SR MT 125	\$3290
Mojito 125	\$4990
Scarabeo 200 ie	\$4850
Sportcity Cube 300	\$6290
Sportcity 300 Street	\$6290
Scarabeo 300 ie	\$6490
SR Max 300	\$6490
Scarabeo 500 ie	\$8490
SRV850	\$14,990

## BENELLI

[www.benelli.com.au](http://www.benelli.com.au)

### ROAD

BN 302	\$5590
BN600i	\$8990
BN600S	\$8990
BN600GT	\$8990
BN600GTS	\$8990
BN600R	\$9990
BN600RS	\$9990
TnT 899	\$16,990
TnT 1130 R	\$22,690
Tre-K 1130	\$18,490

### ADV TOURING

Tre-K Amazonas	\$19,690
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## BIMOTA

[www.bimotaaustralia.com.au](http://www.bimotaaustralia.com.au)

### ROAD

DB5R	\$37,990
DB10	\$37,290
DB9	\$44,990
DB9 S	\$46,990
Tesi 3D Naked	\$55,990
DB11	\$56,990
BB3	\$72,888
DB8 OroNero	\$84,990

## BMW

[www.bmwmotorrad.com.au](http://www.bmwmotorrad.com.au)

### ROAD

F 800 R	\$13,100
F 800 GT	\$16,300
S 1000 R	\$19,290
S 1000 RR	\$22,990
R Nine T	\$21,250
R 1200 R	\$21,950
R 1200 R Sport	\$22,350
R 1200 R Exclusive	\$22,350
R 1200 RS	\$22,950
R 1200 RS Exclusive	\$23,250
R 1200 RT	\$30,790
K 1300 R	\$21,990
K 1300 S	\$23,990
K 1300 S Motorsport	\$28,990
K 1600 GT	\$35,990
K 1600 GT Sport	\$36,490
K 1600 GTL	\$37,590
K 1600 GTL Exclusive	\$42,500

### ADV SPORT

S 1000 XR	\$22,190
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### ADV TOURING

G 650 GS	\$9990
G 650 GS Sertao	\$10,990
F 700 GS	\$12,890
F 700 GS LS	\$13,140

F 800 GS	\$16,690
F 800 GS LS	\$16,940
F 800 GSA	\$18,650
R 1200 GS	\$21,950
R 1200 GSA	\$24,550

### SCOOTER

C 600 Sport	\$13,990
C 600 Sport SE	\$15,090
C 650 GT	\$14,990
C 650 GT SE	\$16,665
C 650 GT SE LS	\$16,465

## BRAAAP

[www.braapmotorcycles.com](http://www.braapmotorcycles.com)

### ROAD

Street Superlite 125	\$2999
Mercury	\$3999

## CAN-AM (BRP)

[www.brp.com](http://www.brp.com)

\*All prices are ride away

### ROAD

Spyder RS SM5	\$19,990
Spyder RS S Red SE5	\$23,990
Spyder RS S Wht SE5	\$23,990
F3S SM5	\$25,790
F3S SE5	\$28,890
Spyder ST S SE5	\$25,490
Spyder ST Ltd SE5	\$28,990
Spyder RT SM6	\$31,490
Spyder RT S SE6	\$39,990
Spyder RT Ltd SE6	\$41,990

## CF MOTO

[www.cf-moto.com.au](http://www.cf-moto.com.au)

### ROAD

V-Night 150	\$2690
Leader	\$2190
650NK	\$5990
650TK	\$7990

### CRUISER

V5	\$3990
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### SCOOTER

Jetmax 250	\$4190
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## CONFEDERATE MOTORCYCLES

[www.confederate.com.au](http://www.confederate.com.au)

### ROAD

X132 Hellcat	\$79,990
X132 Hellcat Combat	\$94,990
X132 Hellcat Speedster	\$POA
R131 Fighter	\$POA
R135 Wraith Combat	\$POA

## DAELIM

[www.daelim.com.au](http://www.daelim.com.au)

### ROAD

VJF250	\$4490
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### SCOOTER

Bbone	\$3490
Besbi	\$2190
SI	\$3290

## DERBI

[www.derbinos.com.au](http://www.derbinos.com.au)

### SCOOTER

GPI 250	\$6299
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## DUCATI

[www.ducati.com.au](http://www.ducati.com.au)

### ROAD

Monster 659 ABS	\$12,990
Scrambler Icon (Red)	\$12,990
Scrambler Icon (Yellow)	\$13,140
Scrambler Classic	\$14,990
Scrambler Urban Enduro	\$14,990
Scrambler Full Throttle	\$14,990
Hypermotard Red	\$16,990
Hypermotard Black	\$17,290
Hyperstrada	\$17,990
Monster 821 Dark	\$16,290

Monster 821 Red	\$16,790
Monster 821 White	\$16,990
Monster 821 Stripes	\$17,990
Streetfighter 848	\$17,490
Panigale 899 Red	\$19,990
Panigale 899 White	\$20,490
Hypermotard SP	\$21,490
Monster 1200	\$19,990
Monster 1200 S Red	\$24,290
Monster 1200 S White	\$24,490
Monster 1200 Stripes	\$25,490
Diavel	\$24,490
Diavel Red	\$24,990
Diavel Carbon Red	\$30,290
Diavel Carbon White	\$30,290
Diavel Titanium	\$39,990
Panigale 1299	\$27,990
Panigale 1299 S	\$34,990
Panigale R	\$45,990

### ADV TOURING

Multistrada 1200 DVT	\$23,990
Multistrada 1200 S DVT R	\$27,990
Multistrada 1200 S DVT W	\$28,490

## ERIK BUELL RACING

[www.erikbuellracing.com.au](http://www.erikbuellracing.com.au)

### ROAD

I190RX	\$26,490
I190SX	\$23,490
I190RS Carbon	\$56,990

## HARLEY-DAVIDSON

[www.harley-davidson.com](http://www.harley-davidson.com)

\*All Harley-Davidson prices are ride away

### CRUISER

Street 500	\$10,750
XL883L SuperLow	\$14,995
XL883N Iron 883	\$14,995
XL1200V Seventy-Two	\$18,495
XL1200C Custom	\$18,750
XL1200X Forty-Eight	\$19,250
XL1200T SuperLow	\$19,495
FXDB Street Bob	\$22,495
FXDL Low Rider	\$23,495
FXDB Street Bob Special	\$23,995
FXDWG Wide Glide	\$24,995
FXDF Fat Bob	\$25,495
FLD Switchback	\$26,250
FLS Softail Slim	\$26,495
FLSS Softail Slim S	\$28,995
FLSTFB Fat Boy Lo	\$28,995
FLSTF Fat Boy	\$29,250
FLSTFBS Fat Boy S	\$31,495
FLSTN Softail Deluxe	\$29,250
FXSB Breakout	\$29,750
FLSTC Heritage Softail Classic...	\$32,250
FLHR Road King	\$32,495
FLTRXS Road Glide Special	\$34,750
FLHXS Street Glide Special	\$34,995
FLHTK Ultra Limited	\$38,250
VRSC Muscle	\$27,495
VRSC Night Rod Special	\$27,995

### CVO

FLHXSE Street Glide	\$47,495
FLTRUSE Road Glide Ultra	\$48,995
FLHTKSE Ultra Limited	\$50,995

## HONDA

<http://motorcycles.honda.com.au>

### ROAD

CB125E	\$2099
CB300F	\$5699
CBR300R	\$5699
CBR300R ABS	\$5999
CBR300R SE	\$5799
CBR300R ABS SE	\$6099
CB400	\$10,099
CB400A ABS	\$11,199
CB500F	\$7499
CBR500R	\$7499
CBR500R ABS	\$7799
CBR600RR	\$14,390
CB650F ABS	\$9999
CBR650F ABS	\$10,599
NC700SA ABS	\$8550
CTX700A ABS	\$7399
CTX700D ABS DCT	\$10,899



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NC750SA ABS \$8799  
VFR800F \$14,599  
CBR1000RR \$16,899  
CBR1000RR ABS \$17,899  
CBR1000RR SP \$22,499  
CBR1000RR SP Marquez \$22,499  
VFR1200F ABS \$16,999  
CTX1300 \$18,499  
Goldwing F6B \$25,199  
GL1800 Goldwing Luxury \$35,799

### CRUISER

VT400 \$9399  
CTX700NA ABS \$9099  
VT750C Shadow \$11,749  
VT1300CX Fury \$15,599  
GL1800 Valkyrie \$20,199

### ADV TOURING

CB500X \$7599  
VFR800X Crossrunner \$14,499  
VFR1200X \$17,499

### SCOOTER

NSC110 Dio \$2549  
PCX150 \$4199  
NSS300A Forza \$6999  
NC750D Integra \$11,199

## HOSSTYLE CYCLES

[www.hosstylecycles.com.au](http://www.hosstylecycles.com.au)

Barbarian V8 \$45,000

## HUNTER

[www.huntermotorcycles.com.au](http://www.huntermotorcycles.com.au)

### CRUISER

Daytona \$6990  
Spyder \$6990  
Bobber \$7299

## HUSQVARNA

[www.husqvarnamotorcycles.com.au](http://www.husqvarnamotorcycles.com.au)

### ROAD

TR 650 Strada \$7995  
ADV TOURING \$8495  
TR 650 Terra \$8495

## HYOSUNG

[www.hyosung.com.au](http://www.hyosung.com.au)

### ROAD

GT250 \$4990  
GT250R \$5490  
GT650 \$6990  
GT650R \$7490

### CRUISER

GV250 Aquila \$5490  
GV650S Aquila Sport \$7990  
GV650C Aquila Classic \$7990

## INDIAN

[www.indianmotorcycles.com.au](http://www.indianmotorcycles.com.au)

\*All Indian Motorcycle prices are ride away

### CRUISER

Scout \$17,995  
Chief Dark Horse \$26,995  
Chief Classic \$28,995  
Chief Vintage \$31,495  
Chieftain \$35,995  
Chief Roadmaster \$38,995

## KAWASAKI

[www.kawasaki.com.au](http://www.kawasaki.com.au)

### ROAD

Z250SL \$5299  
Z250SLABS \$5599  
Z300 ABS \$5999  
Ninja 300 \$5999

Ninja 300 SE ABS \$6399  
Ninja 300 SE ABS 30th \$6399  
ER-6n/nL ABS \$9999  
Versys 650/LABS \$9,999  
Ninja 650/LABS \$10,499  
Ninja ZX-6R \$14,999  
Ninja ZX-6R 636 \$16,499  
Ninja ZX-6R 636 ABS \$16,649  
W800 SE \$12,499  
Z800 ABS \$12,999  
Z1000 ABS SE \$16,799  
Ninja 1000 ABS \$16,999  
Ninja ZX-10R 30th \$18,999  
Ninja ZX-10R ABS 30th \$20,699  
Ninja ZX-10R ABS SE \$19,999  
Ninja ZX-14R ABS Ohlins \$21,999  
Ninja ZX-14R ABS SE \$20,299  
1400GTR ABS \$24,999  
H2 \$33,000

### CRUISER

Vulcan S \$9999  
Vulcan 900 Classic SE \$12,499  
Vulcan 900 Custom \$12,699  
Vulcan 1700 Classic ABS \$19,999  
Vulcan 1700 Nomad ABS \$22,999  
Vulcan 1700 Vaquero ABS \$24,499  
Vulcan 1700 Voyager ABS \$25,999

### ADV TOURING

KLR650 \$8099  
Versys 1000 ABS \$15,999

Vulcan 900 Classic SE \$12,499  
Vulcan 900 Custom \$12,699  
Vulcan 1700 Classic ABS \$19,999  
Vulcan 1700 Nomad ABS \$22,999  
Vulcan 1700 Vaquero ABS \$24,499  
Vulcan 1700 Voyager ABS \$25,999

### ADV TOURING

KLR650 \$8099  
Versys 1000 ABS \$15,999

## KTM

[www.ktm.com.au](http://www.ktm.com.au)

### ROAD

390 Duke \$6495  
RC390 \$8295  
690 Duke R \$13,495  
690 SMC R \$14,395  
1190 RC8 R \$24,995  
1290 Super Duke R \$23,490  
ADV TOURING \$14,395  
690 Enduro R \$18,995  
1050 Adventure \$20,995  
1190 Adventure \$21,995  
1290 Super Adventure \$26,995

## KYMCO

[kymco.com.au](http://kymco.com.au)

### ROAD

CK 125 \$2095  
CRUISER \$5295  
Venox 250 \$5295  
SCOOTER \$2595  
Super 8 125 \$2995  
Like 125 \$2799  
Espresso 150 \$3395  
Like 200 \$7495  
Downtown 300i ABS \$7495

## LARO

[www.laro.com.au](http://www.laro.com.au)

### ROAD

R11 250 \$4750  
Venom 350 \$4990  
CRUISER \$5290  
Cruiser 350 \$6990  
Pro Street 350 \$6990

## MOTO GUZZI

[www.motoguzzi.com.au](http://www.motoguzzi.com.au)

### ROAD

V7 Stone \$12,490  
V7 Special \$12,990  
V7 Racer S.E. \$14,990

1200 Sport 8V SE \$17,490  
Griso 1200 8V SE ABS \$19,490  
Norge GT 8V ABS \$20,990

### CRUISER

Bellagio 940 \$16,990  
California 1400 Audace \$TBA  
California 1400 Eldorado \$TBA  
California 1400 Custom \$21,490  
California 1400 Touring \$24,490  
Cali 1400 Touring SE \$TBA

### ADV TOURING

Stelvio 1200 8V ABS \$19,990  
Stelvio 1200 8V NTX ABS \$21,490

## MV AGUSTA

[www.mvagusta.com.au](http://www.mvagusta.com.au)

### ROAD

Brutale 675 \$15,799  
F3 675 \$18,699  
Brutale 800 \$17,699  
Brutale 800 RR \$19,999  
Brutale 800 Dragster \$20,499  
Brutale 800 Dragster RR \$22,999  
F3 800 \$19,999  
Stradale 800 \$19,999  
Turismo Veloce 800 \$20,499  
Turismo Veloce Lusso 800. \$23,499  
Brutale 1090 \$19,999  
Brutale 1090 RR \$22,999  
Brutale 1090 Corsa \$27,999  
F4 \$24,499  
F4 RR \$33,999  
F4 RC \$55,880

## NORTON

[www.frasermotorcycles.com.au](http://www.frasermotorcycles.com.au)

Commando 961 Sport \$29,990  
Commando 961 Café \$33,990  
Commander 961 SF \$35,990

## PGO

[www.pgo-scooter.com](http://www.pgo-scooter.com)

### SCOOTER

Ligero 150 \$3590  
X Hot 150 \$3990

## PIAGGIO

[www.piaggio.com.au](http://www.piaggio.com.au)

\*Some Piaggio prices are ride away

### SCOOTER

Fly 125 \$2790  
Typhoon 125 \$2990  
Fly 150ie \$3290  
Liberty 150ie \$3490  
X7 300 evo \$5990  
Yourban 300 \$9990  
Beverly 350 \$7990  
XEvo 400 \$8990  
X10 \$11,990

## ROYAL ENFIELD

[www.royalenfield.com.au](http://www.royalenfield.com.au)

### ROAD

Bullet 500 \$7250  
Classic 500 \$7550  
Classic Chrome \$7750  
Continental GT \$8250

## SUZUKI

[www.suzukimotorcycles.com.au](http://www.suzukimotorcycles.com.au)

### ROAD

Inazuma 250 \$4990  
TU250X \$5990  
DR-Z400SM \$8990  
GSX-R600 \$14,990

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SFV650 Gladius  
GSX650F/LAMS  
GSR750  
GSX-R750  
GSX-S1000  
GSX-S1000F  
GSX-R1000  
GSFI250S Bandit ABS  
GSX1250FA  
GSX1300R Hayabusa

#### CRUISER

VL250 Intruder  
VL650 S40  
VL800 C50T  
VZ800 M50  
VZ1500 C90T  
VLR1800T C109RT  
VZR1800 M109R  
VZR1800 M109R Blk  
VZR1800Z M109R SE

#### ADV TOURING

DR200S  
DR650SE  
DL650 V-Strom  
DL650 V-Strom LAMS  
DL650 V-Strom XT  
DL1000 V-Strom

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AN650A Burgman ABS

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[www.scoota.com.au](http://www.scoota.com.au)

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#### ROAD

Street Triple 660  
Street Triple  
Street Triple R  
Street Triple RX  
Daytona 675  
Daytona 675 ABS  
Daytona 675R  
Bonneville Std  
Bonneville Std TT

\$10,490  
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\$14,990  
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Bonneville T214 Land Spd  
Bonneville Newchurch  
Scrambler  
Scrambler TT  
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ThruXton Ace  
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Tiger Sport ABS  
Speed Triple  
Speed Triple ABS  
Speed Triple R ABS  
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Thunderbird Storm Haze  
Thunderbird Nightstorm  
Thunderbird Commander  
Thunderbird Comm TT  
Thunderbird Comm LT  
Thunderbird Comm LT TT  
Rocket III Roadster ABS  
Rocket III X  
Rocket III Touring ABS

#### ADV TOURING

Tiger 800 XR  
Tiger 800 XR.x  
Tiger 800 XRt  
Tiger 800XC  
Tiger 800XCx  
Tiger 800 XCa  
Explorer 1200 ABS  
Explorer 1200 Wire Wheel

### URAL

[www.imz-ural.com.au](http://www.imz-ural.com.au)

#### ROAD

T

cT

#### ADV TOURING

Tourist  
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[www.vespa.com.au](http://www.vespa.com.au)

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946

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Boardwalk Red  
Hammer S  
Hammer S LE  
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R3

SR400

XJ6NL

XJ6NL SE

FZ6R

FZ6R SE

YZF-R6

MT-03

MT-07 LA

MT-07 HO

FZ8N

FZ8S

MT-09

MT-09 ABS

MT-09 Tracer

TDM900

FZ1N

FZ1S

YZF-R1

YZF-R1M

FJR1300AT

FJR1300A

FJR1300AE

VMAX

#### CRUISER

XV250 Virago

XVS650 Custom

XVS650A Classic

Bolt

Bolt R-Spec

Bolt C-Spec

XVS950A

XVS1300 Stryker - Black

XVS1300 Stryker - Grey

XVS1300A

XVS1300AT Tourer

XV1900A Roadliner

XV1900AT Star Tourer

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### ZERO

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#### ROAD

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# BEAR FACED

## HOT RODDING... ER, RIDING

You will read my whinging about riding in the heat in the next issue of MOTORCYCLIST, but I thought I'd get in early in this column.

Heat can be your friend. Bless the inventor who came up with hot air hand dryers; she or he has probably helped tens of thousands of motorcyclists to continue on their rides after they warmed up hands and other parts of their anatomy. And of course there is nothing like an open fire after a cold ride, unless it is an open fire in a pub. But like anything good, an excess can go the other way.

Consider Guinness; the first glass is wonderful, as is the next, but there comes a point of declining returns, and next morning you wake up in an alley with your face in something you definitely don't want to examine more closely.

Marble Bar in Western Australia is often quoted as the place with the highest maximum temperatures in Australia or even the world, but it apparently doesn't even make the top 10. Outback Queensland holds the Aussie record, with 69.3 degrees. And if that isn't hot enough for you, you might like to plan a summer ride through the Lut desert in Iran, where the maximum recorded (by satellite; nobody's crazy enough to live there) was 70.6 degrees. Death Valley comes in at a relatively benign maximum of 56.7 degrees, and it was 48.9 when I was there recently.

But hot? That's not hot. This is hot: my mate Charlie and I were somewhere between Meerut and Khatauli, north of Delhi, when the thermometer read 52 degrees in the shade of a rest house. It felt as if we were riding into an oven.

We subsequently discovered why so many Indian people sleep on charpoys, beds of rope twisted together like a net for giant fish. It allows some, no matter how little, air flow under your body. Without that you can easily find yourself glued to your bed by your own sweat – whether you sleep or not.

Ah yes, sleep. It's a problem in diametrically opposed ways. On the one hand, as I've just mentioned, it is devilishly difficult to get to sleep when you're trying to. I've been through the litany – a cold shower and getting into bed wet, soaking the bedsheets in cold (or as cold as you can get) water, wetting your mosquito net if you have one and so on. If it's hot enough, none of the above works although sleeping on a charpoy can help. There is another form of help, of course, and that's an air conditioner. You'd be amazed how much wheezing and clattering from a superannuated air conditioner you'll put up with when the alternative is roasting.

On the other hand, you can all too easily find yourself falling asleep on the bike. I've never been able to work out why heat should have these opposite effects, but I can definitely

vouch for them. Coming into Las Vegas on the US trip I literally dozed off, even if it was only for a second or so. This scared the living wossname out of me, but even so it was only enough to keep me alert for a few minutes. I called a halt and poured the contents of a couple of icy bottles of water into and over myself. The others were doing the same thing.

I also drank a small red bottle of 5-hour ENERGY. Described on the interwebs

as a "noxious little drink" which "tastes like what I would imagine the inside of a battery to taste like, and... is about the size of a D cell," it has one major advantage over other ways of staying alert: it works. Down one of the bottles and you will be alert; be in no doubt about that. Available in groceries and service stations in the US, its slogan is "Feel it in minutes, Lasts for hours" and while it may not last for five hours, it will certainly snap you out of any tendency to sleep.

I didn't read the contents list; I was far too keen for something, anything, to wake me up and keep me alert. There are few sounds more scary on a bike than that of the front tyre on the rumble strip, waking you from a short stay in bye-byes land.

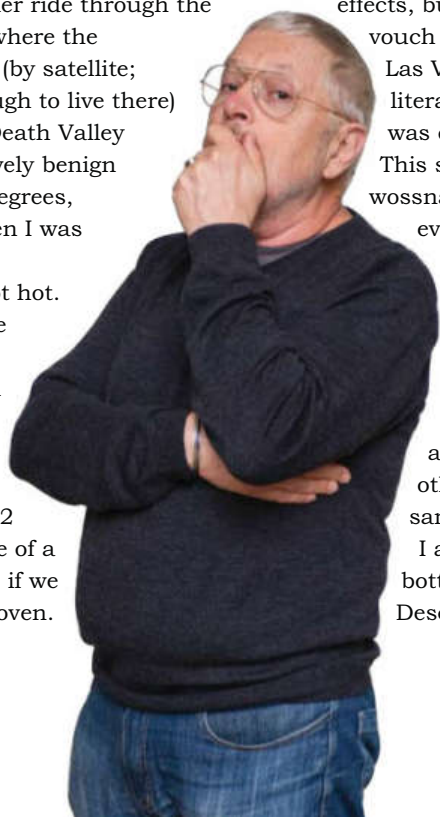
The stay can all too easily become permanent...

You still need water, of course. It is amazing how much water the human body can lose as sweat without shutting down; GP racers lose kilos of weight during a race, which translates to litres of water. That needs to be replaced, whether you're Rossi or, well, you out on a lonesome road in outback Queensland at 69.3 degrees.

When I found myself in Varanasi with no cold beer or even water to be had, I was advised by a local that it was better to drink something warm in the heat, anyway. Following his advice I downed a few pots of tea and found myself unable to sleep for a night or two...

To the contrary, a Columbia University study has found that cold water is absorbed more quickly by the body. It can also be useful in reducing your core temperature if that's too high. But it doesn't make a significant difference. It's water that is your best friend, no matter what its temperature, when it's hot outside. Read about it next month!

Peter "The Bear" Thoeming ●





# YOU'RE PULLING YOURSELVES



Here's what I'm not getting. Motorcycles pulling trailers. I didn't get it when I first saw it many years ago, and I do not get it now. I don't see it often, but from time to time, I come across some bloke hauling a trailer behind his motorcycle.

Naturally, I spend as little time as possible behind these mobile chicanes when I encounter them, for I am overcome with visions of catastrophic disaster...

The trailer parts company with the bike and hits me in the face.

The trailer begins to weave and drags the whole parade off the road and into some parts-shedding cartwheel, and I get hit in the face.

The bizarre physics-defying contraption slews off some corner, and the rider goes skidding down the road, spraying arterial blood into the sky, and that hits me in the face too.

What the bastard hell is going on here, people?

What are you doing that requires you to tow a metric tonne of shit behind your bike?

Camping? Piss off. I've been camping. Everything any bloke needs to take camping is easily strapped to the back of a bike. Going camping with a pillion? Same deal. Maybe add some hard luggage if she's taking all of her face-creams and hair products.

What could you possibly require that would cause you to affix a trailer to the back of your motorcycle? What's wrong with you?

It's a motorcycle. Surely the whole point of a motorcycle is the cornering-and-acceleration paradigm, is it not? You know, swooping into corners, powering out of them, repeat ad infinitum.

Now add a trailer.

Gone is the swooping. Gone is the acceleration. Gone is the entire reason for riding a motorcycle.

Yes, I understand that motorcycle trailer design has come a long way in the last few decades. Some grey-bearded, liver-pill-filled dodderer tried to regale me with the technical marvels of his Harley-trailer-

combo when he caught me looking at it at a rest stop on Thunderbolt's Way a while back.

"Stop talking to me," I said to him as he launched into an inane diatribe about trailer-life. "If you need to carry around that much shit when you go riding, then it's time to buy a car and flush your motorcycling credentials down the nearest shitter."

"But..." he stuttered.

"No more talking to me," I said firmly.

Hauling a trailer around behind a bike has surely got to be the stupidest thing a man can do. It's right up there with bolting a sidecar onto your bike, or buying one of those high-powered, three-wheeled mobility scooters called a Spyder, and pretending you're still a motorcyclist.

Certainly, there are arguments for the riding of three-wheelers that can be made for the lame and the infirm who crave handlebars but lack functioning legs. We'll have that argument another time.

Right now, I am struggling to understand what possesses a man to hitch a trailer to his bike and go riding.

If it was because he'd swilled his weight in beer and there was some kind of wager on the table, then I get that. I've done lots of stupid shit for a bet when I've been drunk.

There can be no other reason.

I've spent weeks on the road. With pillions. I've slept in table drains and under bridges. Everything I (or we) ever needed was tied to my bike. I never once leaned back against a tree, looked into the campfire and thought: "Gee, I wish I'd brought a 20kg gas cylinder, a three-burner barbecue, a canvas awning, four chairs, a card table, a chainsaw, a shower, a compressor, a tyre-changing machine, an 80-litre esky and a nice rug on my motorcycle journey. Maybe I'll get a trailer so I can do that next time."

Is it great to have such things on a camping trip? Sure.

Is it worth compromising the ride to have such things?

No. Not ever. Not on this planet and not on any other planet.

If you are unable to enjoy yourself in the wild without the aid of all that shit you feel you need to tow behind your bike, then there's something tragically wrong with you. As a motorcyclist, I mean. You're probably a really good person, who is nice to animals and gives to charities. But you're no longer a motorcyclist. You've bolted a trailer to the back of your bike and rendered it an "un-bike". Why don't you just toss all that shit into a car instead? Spare yourself the soul-draining horror of idling along at a relative snail's pace, wondering if the next corner is going to see you jack-knifing your shit into the trees.

Hang on...is that it?

You do this trailer stuff because you get off on the fear? You get a rush from rendering a perfectly-balanced two-wheeled weapon into something that handles like a sea-chest falling out of a tree, don't you?

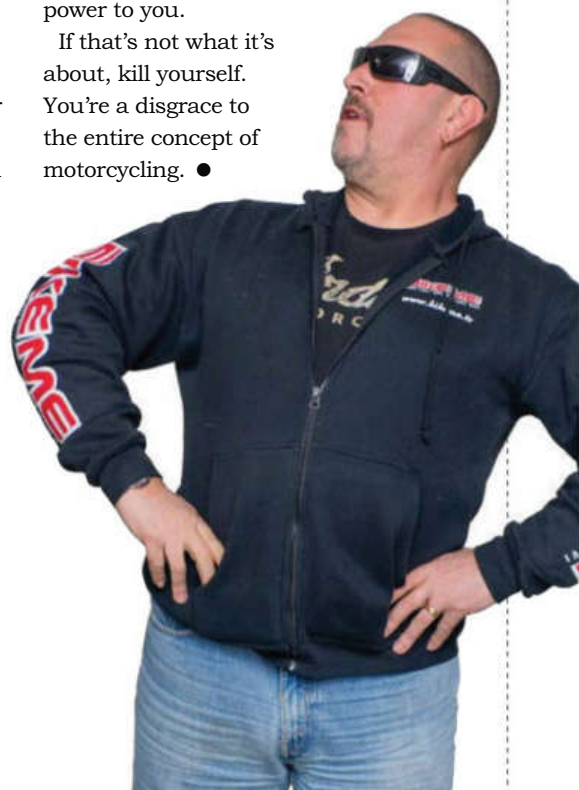
Okay, then. That, I can understand. I have friends like you. They amuse and terrify me in equal measure.

The trailer thing is a challenge. It's like eating a handful of cinnamon powder, or disconnecting your brakes and doing a lap of Phillip Island.

Respect.

If that's what it's about, more power to you.

If that's not what it's about, kill yourself. You're a disgrace to the entire concept of motorcycling. ●





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## BELLINGEN TO MURWILLUMBAH VIA THE HIGHWAY (PRETTY MUCH!)

\* Asterisks indicate locations mentioned in the accompanying town notes.

Head east from Belligen on Waterfall Way and turn north on the Pac Hwy for the 23km up to Coffs Harbour\* where you have a few options on getting to Grafton.

**Blue Route:** If you're staying on the highway just continue through Coffs past the Big Banana on the left and then it's 20km to Woolgoolga\* and then another 60km to Grafton\* where the highway bends right around the Truckies' Memorial.

Fifteen km up the road you'll see the signs left for Ulmarra\* and you then have good refreshment options at Broadwater\* and Newrybar\* before taking a left 178km north of Grafton onto the Tweed Valley Way and the 25km of sweet riding into Murwillumbah.

**Red Route:** Approaching Coffs continue straight through the first big roundabout and go up the rise with the Windmill on your left. Take the left onto Combine St signed for Coramba\*. Follow the Coramba signs right onto Azalea and then left onto Coramba Rd for the 15km up to the town itself and continue another 11km to Nana Glen\*.

**Yellow Detour:** If you just NEED to experience the Big Banana, you can still cut through to Nana Glen. Continue north through Coffs and the big yella fella is on your left. Then head north for just over 1km and then take the left to Searly Lookout/Opal Centre onto Bruxner Park Rd. Continue until you hit the T at Bucca Rd where you

take the left for the run down to Nana Glen. Alternatively you can continue a further 1km up the A1 past the Searly Rd turn and take the left onto Bucca Rd signposted Nana Glen.

From Nana Glen, you've now 50km of very sweet riding up to Grafton.

As you get to South Grafton, you bend sharp left onto Ryan St and then take a right at the first roundabout followed by a quick left onto the highway north and you're back on the Pac!

Grafton City is straight at that first roundabout and over the Clarence. To rejoin the highway you have to retrace your steps to Sth Grafton.

## EBOR TO MURWILLUMBAH VIA MY WAY

**Green Route:** The Ebor to Grafton stretch has some memorable twisty sections plus stretches of more open curves, all of it great riding but can be prone to heaps of tree debris when the wind's up. Take notice of 'Stock on Road' signs as the long paddock here is well used. Seventy five km north you'll get to the Nymboida Coaching Station, once owned by the mild mannered Rusty Crowe but currently ordered closed due to issues about alleged illegal water taking from the river out back. Pity! From here it's just on 40km til you meet up with the Blue Route. Follow the road through the 90 degree left and then go straight through the roundabout for the city centre.

Go through a couple of smaller roundabouts and then take a right on the main street (Prince St), go under the old railway bridge and then take a left at the northern end park which is on your right, following signs for Casino which is 100kms north on Summerland Way, the

most ordinary stretch of this inland route.

More choices here at Casino: Nothing wrong with continuing on the Summerland for the 30kms up to Kyogle. If you do, at the north end of Kyogle there's a fork with a Caltex Servo between the tines. Take the right here onto Kyogle Rd and follow its curves up and out of town and keep on it for the 67kms to Murrwillumbah. Warning: this road is crap! The insides of pretty much every corner are pot holed and scarred. Not a place to be riding B'OUT!

A couple of options:

**Purple Route:** Head east toward Lismore on the Bruxner. When you get to Lismore, at the first roundabout at Elliott St, don't take the right over the bridge into the town centre but continue straight and then take the fourth left onto Casino Rd (signposted Kyogle) and follow it til you get to Tuncester. Here take the right signposted Cawongla and Rock Valley\*.

Some great vacant back roads riding here for the 29km to Cawongla, where you take the right onto the Green Route for a 40km blatt into Uki.

**Yellow Route:** If you wanna channel your inner hippie: don't take the left for Rock Valley but continue straight on Union St then just over the bridge take the left signposted Nimbin for the 30km zip north taking great care of the spaced out kombis with even more spaced out drivers.

Twelve km north of Nimbin bear right onto Blue Knob Rd and then 10 km later take the right onto the Green Route for Uki and Murwillumbah.





TOURATECH





**570KM TOTAL. PINK OPTION  
ROUTE – 90KM. YELLOW  
OPTION ROUTE – 30KM**

### ROAD CONDITIONS

A must do before any trip out this way. Ph 1300 361 033, 08 8082 6660 Bulloo Shire Council on 02 4621 8000 or Melissa and William Thomson at the Tibooburra Family Hotel 08 8091 3314 – the more information you have about the road conditions, the better.

Starting from Cameron Corner, you can decide which way to do this trip – clockwise or anti-clockwise, but as a reference, we went clockwise, heading north-east out of Cameron Corner and turning left towards Omicron, which is around 35km out from The Corner.

Head north around 110km and this is where you have the option to continue straight and do the optional route out past Della Satellite Gas Station, or turn right and head up to Burke & Wills Dig Tree – about 90km. If you're not carrying fuel to make the entire journey, I strongly advise doing the extra loop so that you can stop in at Innamincka to fill up. Either way you should be carrying some extra fuel anyway just in case of the worst – you don't take luck out in places like this, otherwise you'll be in a pine box. Once you get up to Nappa Merrie head south through the landmark, Orientos, down to Santos where you have the option to turn right and head over to Epsilon to stay the night, or continue on to Cameron Corner. From Santos, you've got 55km or so before you need to turn right and head back into Cameron Corner.

### CONTACTS –

Cameron Corner - 08 8091 3872 or email [camcorner@activ8.net.au](mailto:camcorner@activ8.net.au)  
Epsilon - 07 4655 4324 or via email: [epsilon5@bigpond.com](mailto:epsilon5@bigpond.com)  
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